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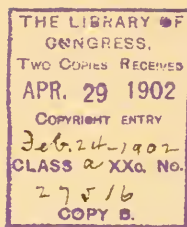
FREAKS
AND
FANCIES.

~~~~~  
1893-1900

*Victor H. ...*

1893-1900  
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## In Explanation.

*No aim, object, or moral is intended to be attached to the contents of this book. The poems, if so they may be called, are simply results of some of the impressions produced by the peculiar phenomenon of coming in contact with this tragi-comic world.*

*The only excuse offered for the existence of the book is—that the writing of it afforded a certain measure of gratification to a few persons—the author included. For this reason, if for no other, it has already fulfilled its purpose. In case the reader is inclined to criticise, he has, undoubtedly, ample grounds herein for all sorts, sizes, and styles of criticism—also the author's assurance that no exceptions will be taken to the same.*

VICTOR HAMMOND.

*Oct. 25th, 1900.*

## Introduction.

*My Muse is a gypsy, and she sings  
Her gypsy songs in her own wild way;  
Careless of aught that men may say  
Of her ill-tuned harp with its tattered strings,  
Of her uncouth garb and half-clipt wings,  
Of her notes of grief and vagary;  
She seeks no laurel—no wreath of bay—  
But rest for a time from her wanderings.*

*For, long has she roamed the barren skies,  
Hoping a key of Heaven to gain,  
Questioning Life—with his mysteries,  
And Death—with his secret, all in vain;  
Pardon the measures, devoid of art,  
That soothe the grief of a gypsy heart.*

## The Enigma.

From out the shadows of eternal past,  
From endless change and counter-change of matter—  
One tiny odd result of never-ceasing forces,  
Has come this earth-life—sad, unsought, and weary.

Oh, strange result of blind and senseless matter—  
To stumble on this mad caprice named “Man”!—  
Who, when he seeks, finds but his nothingness,  
And sees his fettered wondering reason flutter  
And fall before things which it cannot understand ;

Like the bewildered motion of a bat of evening  
Dizzily groping in the noonday light,  
Amazed to find how little he is seeing,  
And finding in excess of sun—the night.

And, tho’ Life’s compound has about it, something  
We feel is good and cannot cast away,  
Yet, who at times can help, in secret, wishing  
That kind Oblivion might have reigned away?

## The Stumbling-block of Logic.

(Pointed out at the request of the ladies of the Sorosis.)

There is whirling thro' space a mysterious star—  
In sunshine and shadow a wonderful star ;  
While all round about it, we know not how far,  
There are skies that are cloudy and skies that are blue,  
Where nightly, more mystical stars come in view  
By hundreds and thousands ; 'tis said to be true  
That, if it were possible here, to endeavor  
To number them all (seen and unseen)—we never  
Would find the sum total—tho' counting forever.

For if you and I were to travel afar  
From this wonderful star—this bewildering star—  
With nothing unpleasant our journey to mar,  
But straight-forward on with the firmest decision,  
And planning our course with the nicest precision—  
So that there might be no disastrous collision  
With planet or sun ; even tho' we should go  
With the swiftness of light, which is surely not slow—  
Say a million of miles in a second or so—  
If, onward thro' space at this rate we should tear,  
And Death did not stop us to take up our fare,  
We never would really get anywhere.

For, after a journey of millions of years,  
Amidst labyrinthian systems of spheres,  
(Tis the weirdest of statements but true), it appears  
That all round about us would still be the blue  
Of infinite space with the stars looking through ;  
'Tis a very bewildering thing to review—  
That just as much farther again we might travel  
And not any part of the myst'ry unravel ;  
For, search as we may o'er the new roads we travel  
In this vexatious Universe, high long and wide,  
We cannot get out—for there is no outside—  
But are penned in forever, let what will betide.

Borne swiftly along on this curious star  
Are the creatures of life—such a magical star!—  
We mortals among them, but just what we are—  
Tho' we ponder it learnedly, fondly, and well,  
Not even Sorosis is able to tell ;  
We each are a problem no mortal can quell.  
Besides, whence we came, and whereto we are going,  
Why here we should journey, and what we are doing,  
Is easy the asking but harder the knowing ;  
No mortal among us can settle the question,  
The wisest give only defective suggestion—  
And views must depend after all—on digestion.

So ladies, if ever your minds you direct  
To these tangles about us, and boldly dissect  
The “how” and the “why,” you should be circumspect ;  
For, tho’ your deductions are based upon truth  
And loftily built by wit, wisdom and youth,  
The following fact seems correct tho’ uncouth :  
*No flawless solution of life and the Giver  
Is known to the creature possessing a liver,  
Altho’ he should reason forever and ever.*

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### So Soon.

The gray of early dawn—the birds—and then the sun,  
To you, my love I come, for soon the day is done,  
To you, my love I come, for soon the sun is gone,  
So soon my love, so soon, the dark night cometh on—  
So soon we sleep.

A song of early morn—a greeting—and a kiss,  
To you my love I come—the queen of all my bliss,  
To you my love I come, to sadly whisper this :  
So soon my love, so soon, each may the other miss—  
So soon we die.

## Thrice Blest.

Blest is the mortal, who, amid the strife,  
The folly and the woe of humankind,  
The unsolved riddles that perplex the mind,  
Saith: "My faith is stronger than the trials of life."

Blest is the mortal, who, with lifted eyes  
Gazing into the depths of Heaven's face—  
That thrice-bound mystery of stars, and time, and space,  
Saith: "My faith is stronger than mysterious skies."

Blest is the mortal, who, with failing breath,  
Launches his soul upon the shadowy sea  
To seek the unknown shores of destiny,  
Saying: "My faith is stronger than the fear of death."

## The Lament of the Golden Rod.

In August days  
The glowing rays  
Came gliding, dancing, from the sun ;  
With laughing gleams  
The rosy beams  
Whispered the love of the glowing sun ;  
So fond, so true,  
The love-beams grew,  
I gave my heart to the golden sun ;  
With trusting breast  
I decked my crest  
With love-beams from the golden sun.

November's here  
So dark and drear  
And far away is the fickle sun ;  
In sad array  
Of brown and grey  
I mourn the falseness of the sun ;  
'Mid ice and snow  
To death I go,  
But what cares he—the cruel sun ;  
In distant bowers  
To foolish flowers  
He whispers love—Oh, heartless sun !

## Sweethearts.

Two pairs of eyes look into mine—  
One pair of changeful blue,  
Of hues that deepen in the sea—  
Those dream-eyes, soft and true ;  
They tell me as no words would tell :  
“My love is all for you ;”  
How sweet to win a maiden’s love—  
A maid of summers two.

Two pairs of eyes look into mine—  
One pair so blackly bright  
They seem to search my inmost soul—  
Those eyes of deepest night ;  
They too are saying : “I love you--  
Each day I love you more ;”  
How sweet to win a maiden’s love—  
A maid of summers four.

### The Song of the Atom.

Forever I roam,  
Forever I roam,  
All time is before me,  
All space is my home.

Dame Nature, my mistress, is constantly striving  
To please her odd fancy, revising, contriving;  
Dissatisfied always with her latest model,  
Which ever gives way to new plans in her noddle;

She uses me here,  
She uses me there,  
In solid, in liquid,  
In sunshine, in air;

Sometimes in a dewdrop enfolded I glitter,  
Sometimes in a tear of unhappiness bitter,  
Sometimes in a roseleaf I nestle in blushes,  
Or with pestilence stalk o'er the marshes and rushes.

Unceasing, untiring,  
Forever I roam,  
All time is before me,  
All space is my home.

Forever I roam,  
Forever I roam,  
Far stranger than journey  
Of fairy or gnome ;

For time is eternal and change is immortal ;  
From furthermore space to each sun's golden portal  
New labors await me, new planets are forming,  
New types are beginning, new life forms are coming  
To struggle with life,  
To be conquered by death ;  
Ah, woe to the creatures  
Afflicted with breath !

Sometimes on the earth with mankind as I travel  
I note his sad tossing between good and evil ;  
Aye, hard are the lessons and stern is the teaching—  
Experience never wastes words in his preaching.

Unceasing, untiring,  
Forever I roam,  
Far stranger than journey  
Of fairy or gnome.

Forever I roam,  
Forever I roam,  
My mission a secret  
In Heaven's high dome ;  
For what knows the atom of God—the great Total?—  
His secrets are not for the atom and mortal.  
Altho' without rest I am ceaselessly driven,  
In Nature's mad pranks being constantly given  
From life-form to life-form,  
Thro' all I still trust  
That the aim is perfection,  
The mission is just ;  
Yet oft am I sad from the struggle and toiling,  
The lives that seem useless, the striving and moiling,  
The joy and the sorrow of living and dying,  
The hopes that are blasted, the sadness, the sighing,  
Thro' the ponderous Universe  
Onward I roam,  
My mission a secret  
In Heaven's high dome.

### The Loss of Summer.

Hearken to the night-wind sighing  
In the branches of the pine ;  
She is fled—bewitching Summer—  
Crowned with blossom leaf and vine.  
While she reigned, the fields were ringing  
With the laughter and the singing  
Of the birds and children mingling  
In a melody divine.  
Queen of beauty, queen of flowers,  
Bright with dew and fragrant showers !  
Hush—the wind is sadly sighing  
In the branches of the pine ;  
She is fled—bewitching Summer,  
Crowned with blossom, leaf and vine.

In her stead the tyrant Winter  
Rules with iron-sceptered sway ;  
While the birds, the leaves and flowers  
Have with Summer gone away ;  
We again may see them—never—  
You and I may pass forever  
Far beyond the shadowed river,  
Deep in death's chill mystery.  
Leaden-gray the clouds are flying,  
Brown and sere the dead leaves lying ;  
Hush—the wind is sadly sighing  
In the branches of the pine ;  
She is fled—bewitching Summer—  
Crowned with blossom leaf and vine.

## Two Cities.

In the valley, in the sunshine,  
Lies a mighty city, rife  
With unceasing din and turmoil,  
Thronged with eager restless life.  
See the crowds down in the valley  
Pressing thro' each street and alley.  
What a mystery—this city  
    Filled with strife!

On the hillside, in the shadow,  
Lies another city, dressed  
All in white and green, while quiet  
Reigns o'er every sleeper's breast;  
Here is ended all the hurry,  
All the tumult, all the worry;  
What a mystery—this city  
    Filled with rest!

## Outline for an Orthodox Sermon.

Text—"Hear counsel and receive instruction that thou mayst be wise in the latter end." Prov : XIX : 20.

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We know just how this earth was made,  
We know just when it was begun,  
We know precisely what God said  
As He commenced, as He was done.

We know just why we all are here,  
The way to Hell—the way to Heaven ;  
And if mankind won't go our way,  
Why then they should of course be driven.

For those who with us disagree  
We have a holy high disgust ;  
(No, *pity* is the word we use)  
And henceforth we sincerely trust—

That all who enter here to-night  
Will strive to reach our Heaven fair ;  
But you must travel o'er our route  
Or we know you will not be there.

And, should you grace the frying-pan,  
We trust sometime you will repent,  
And then, perchance, our God will be  
Less savage and more lenient.

Pray may the Heavenly Father spare  
From rheumatism, Deacon Jones,  
And banish the bacteria  
That build their homes among his bones.

And spare—oh, spare our brother Smith!  
Drive indigestion far away—  
Lift up the burden he has borne  
Since dinner on Thanksgiving-day.

And brethren, we must all beseech  
Our God a faithful watch to keep,  
For otherwise, He may forget  
And stop to play, or go to sleep.

May He be ever a success,  
Using us well on earth, and when  
We leave may we roost near the throne  
And have a pair of wings. Amen.

**Faith.**

Silently fall the blossoms of snow  
From the meadows of gray above ;  
Down on the cold earth, naked and brown,  
Cresting the hills with a jeweled crown,  
Draping the fields in a robe of down  
From the meadows of gray above ;  
Over Earth's mourning-weeds of brown  
A robe from the meadows above.

Silently fall the blossoms of faith  
From a Love that is more than love ;  
Down on the mortal, troubled and worn,  
Soothing the spirit from loss overborne,  
Soothing the grief of those who mourn—  
The blossoms of faith born of Love ;  
Draping the sorrows of those who mourn  
With blossoms of faith born of Love.

### A Song of the Sunset-Sea.

I found a boat—a bonnie boat  
Afloat on the Sunset-Sea,  
And in the boat was a beautiful lass  
Waiting and watching for me—  
Waiting and watching for me to pass  
Near the bonnie boat on the sea.

Then hoisting a sail—a silvery sail  
In this boat of the Sunset-Sea—  
O'er the golden track of the setting sun,  
On and on till the day was done  
And the stars came twinkling one by one,  
We flew o'er the Sunset-Sea,  
With the beautiful lass in the bonnie boat—  
I sailed o'er the Sunset-Sea.

Away to a cloud—a crimson cloud—  
An isle of the Sunset-Sea,  
Where the Beautiful reigned, where sorrow and care  
And all the ills we mortals bear  
Were yet unknown ; to this islet rare  
We sailed o'er the star-lit sea ;  
With the beautiful lass in the bonnie boat—  
I sailed o'er the Sunset-Sea.

There I awoke, then vanished the boat—  
The boat and the Sunset-Sea ;  
And vanished with them the beautiful lass,  
Without a farewell away did she pass,  
And faded the cloud-built isle ; alas,  
'Twas a dream that had come to me !—  
Only a dream—the bonnie boat  
And the sail o'er the Sunset-Sea.

### The Jewel of Truth.

Fresh from the mighty Master-mind of Heaven  
A seraph lightly floated to the earth,  
And, poised above the striving multitude,  
Threw down amongst the crowd a precious gem—  
One of the jewels from the sacred crown  
Worn by the Goddess of Immortal Truth.  
The jewel rolled along the city-street,  
Was cast by hurrying feet from place to place,  
While thousands glanced down at it in the dust  
And never knew its priceless worth nor saw  
The hidden radiance. The shallow gaze  
Of men perceived not, they supposed it but  
A dull unsightly pebble of the dust.

One day a Dreamer, passing with the throng,  
Beheld its beauty. Raising it aloft  
He cried: "Behold, my brothers, what I find—  
A radiant gem cast from the crown of Truth!"  
Men looked, then sneered, or silent shook their heads;  
They saw a pebble, dull and roughly shaped.  
Again the Dreamer cried: "A precious gem  
Cast from the sacred crown of mighty Truth!—  
Brothers, this jewel is a talisman  
To raise us high above our many woes."  
And thus he prated till the multitudes  
In stupid anger scourged him from their sight,  
Loaded his name with scorn and contumely;  
And Mockery kept watch above his tomb.

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Years pass, and men have gained a purer height;  
Their eyes grown clearer see the starry gem  
And glory in its beauty. There, where once  
Was but a lone and long-neglected grave,  
Towers the column of a monument;  
While, o'er the Dreamer's bones, the little men  
That never see the jewel of to-day,  
Speak whispered words of awe and reverence;  
So—truths are slowly borne into the world.

### The Mortal.

With dimples, with sweetness, with tiny pink toes,  
A spirit as light as the soul of a rose,  
With brow all unclouded, so trustful and true,  
With eyes widely opened at wonders they view,  
A wee rosy mouth, and a tiny snub nose,  
A body encased in a tangle of clothes,  
With gurgling and chatter of Baby-hood-land—  
That wonderful language that all understand,  
With the light patter-patter of feet on the stair—  
So journeys the mortal to life's joy and care.

With time-furrowed features, with travel-stained feet,  
A spirit o'erburdened with life's bitter-sweet,  
With brow lined and chiseled by grim circumstance,  
The body bowed downward by struggles with chance,  
With heart grown weary from stories of woe,  
With eyes where lurk visions of scenes long ago,  
A prayer for the future, a sigh for the past—  
So, out of life's struggle, the mortal is cast.

## I Wonder Why.

Each flower that blooms with fragrant breath  
    Blooms but to die ;  
All happiness is incomplete  
    And ends—a sigh ;  
No hope so bright but doubt will reign,  
No change but mingles loss with gain,  
No pleasure but will fade for pain ;  
    I wonder why.

No summer sun but somewhere pales  
    In winter's sky ;  
No rainbow's jewel but is set  
    'Mid storm-clouds high ;  
When knowledge comes, 'tis but to show  
How little we poor mortals know  
As blindly on our way we go ;  
    I wonder why.

No truth but struggles fiercely with  
    Some subtle lie ;  
No true-love knot so firm but time  
    Will it untie ;  
A mystery the stars o'erhead,  
A mystery the earth we tread,  
A mystery reigns o'er the dead ;  
    I wonder why.

Is such a lot to be our fate  
    For aye and aye ?  
Will coming time ne'er answer this  
    Sad human cry ?  
Shall we not know sometime, somewhere,  
The use in sorrow, pain, and care,  
And cease to doubt, to mourn, to fear  
    And wonder why ?

## Theological Research.

(Being the true history of one practical but unsuccessful investigation.)

“Say, will you tell me, who is God  
The min’ster talks about?  
I’ve thought and thought all by myself  
And cannot think it out;  
For every Sunday at the church,  
Just when the singing’s done,  
We all look down upon the floor,  
(It is the nicest fun)  
And the min’ster looks up in the roof  
And talks up to some one  
That he calls God or else the Lord.  
’Tis a pity God isn’t there,  
The min’ster says such *lovely* things  
To Him in every prayer.  
And do please tell me, *where* is God  
The min’ster talks about?  
I’ve thought and thought all by myself  
And cannot think it out.”

She stood with eager eyes and upturned face  
Asking the questions that are asked in vain  
By sage and seer of every time and race—  
Expecting me to make the matter plain.  
“Please tell me—won’t you?—for I know you can,  
You know most everybody in the town,  
So tell me who God is and where He lives—  
Why do you shake your head at me and frown?”

Who could resist a pleading such as this  
From lips and eyes of an adoring miss?—  
’Twas not within the power of mortal man,  
So, groping lamely, I this wise began :  
“We cannot *know*, my dear, but this we feel :  
That He is everywhere ; the thunder’s peal,  
The lightning’s flash, the cradle and the bier,  
The earth, the stars and all things, far or near,  
Our very selves—our hope, our joy, our fear,  
Are parts of God, for He is everywhere.”

“His voice is borne on every breeze,  
O’er desert plains, o’er leafy leas,  
O’er all the lands, o’er all the seas,  
My bonnie little lass ;  
We see Him where the tempest lowers  
In wintry snows and summer showers,  
In giant trees and tiny flowers,  
We see Him in the grass ;  
In everything afar or near,  
For God is always everywhere.”

She listened with her head inclined  
So wisely and her childish mind  
Striving to grasp my words in vain—  
Vague words—so halting dull and blind—  
Poor wayward children of the brain,  
Perplexing, where we would make plain,  
Confusing, where we would explain.

“He’s in the grass ! Did you say in the grass?”  
“Yes, dear, He is in all things everywhere,  
The grass, the trees, the stars, the birds, the flowers—  
In all, afar and near.”

Next day, the little maiden, on the lawn,  
Down on her hands and knees, with anxious face,  
Went peering o'er and o'er the strip of green—  
Searching in every place.

“Tell me, that I may help you ; what is lost?”

But, seeing me, she rose in solemn mood,  
And, walking slowly till she reached my side,  
Pondering deeply, stood.

“We were mistaken, some way, about God ;  
You said He's in the grass and everywhere ;  
I've looked all day so careful o'er the lawn,  
I guess He isn't there.

I found the ants and all the little bugs,  
I searched the vine that climbs along the walls ;  
I guess to-day that God was not at home,  
Perhaps He's making calls.”

---

So we—the larger children—likewise grope  
And search as did this small inquiring lass,  
Looking with eyes that see, yet cannot see,  
For God down in the grass.

**Eternity.**

We live, we die, a passing throng  
Of fragile forms with fleeting breath ;  
We have our day and turn away  
Into the secret walks of Death ;  
But men may come as men have gone,  
The gray-beard—Father Time—lives on.

The sun will crumble in his course,  
And orbs will shine now lost in night ;  
Each twinkling star in space afar  
Will in new orbits take its flight ;  
But suns may come as suns have gone,  
The gray-beard—Father Time—lives on.

The New will fade into the Old,  
And types and systems hold their sway,  
As restless Change shall re-arrange  
The Universe in strange array ;  
But all may come as all has gone,  
The gray-beard—Father Time—lives on.

### The Fate of Beauty.

A wild rose grew by a mossy wall—  
A radiant beauty of summer-time ;  
Perfect in blossom leaf and stem,  
Softer in tint than the fairest gem,  
Bearing a perfume half divine ;  
Perchance a God from the golden clime  
Of Elysian Fields, on an earthly call,  
Had left the rose by the mossy wall.

Hark to the tempest's sullen might !  
The wild-rose rare—the wild-rose fair—  
Was crushed and soiled in the angry night.

A sweet child strayed over hill and dale  
Filled with the joy of the summer-time ;  
Innocence dwelt in her dreamy eyes  
Deep with the light of summer skies,  
Something she seemed that was half divine ;  
Perchance she had strayed from the happy clime  
Of an angel-realm to this troubled vale,  
Losing her way o'er hill and dale.

Hark to the din of hurrying feet !  
The child so rare—the child so fair—  
Was crushed and soiled in the city street.

## Birth.

Thro' the byways, far and dim,  
Goes a band of Seraphim  
Gaily o'er the way along  
Caroling an ancient song :

*“ We—the soldiers sworn of Fate—  
Ever hasten to obey;  
Onward to the Cypress Gate—  
Be it early—be it late—  
Onward to the Cypress Gate  
Caroling our ancient lay.”*

In their midst a captive borne,  
Quiet—wondering—forlorn,—  
Stolen from a gladsome clime  
Far away from Space and Time,—  
Stolen from a mystic land  
Pillaged by this elfin band—  
By this elfin cavalcade  
In some madcap midnight raid.  
Quiet—wondering—forlorn—  
In their midst a captive borne.

Now they pause—for, thro the gloom,  
Ghostly sad and silent, loom  
Contours of the Cypress Gate  
Guarded by the Sons of Fate.

“Who goes there?” the Echoes sigh ;  
Straightway comes the elfin cry :  
“We—and with us, captive-borne,  
One who seeks the Hope of Morn,—  
Captive from a region far—  
Far beyond the utmost star.  
Open wide the Cypress Gate—  
Open—faithful Sons of Fate.”

Now—behold !—the gate is thrown  
Open wide and—cold—alone—  
Out to battle with the Dust,  
Fiercely is the captive thrust—  
Out into this troubled land  
That no man can understand.

Caroling an ancient lay,  
Gaily madly o’er the way  
Goes the troop of Seraphim  
Thro’ the byways far and dim.

### The Temptation.

Eternal struggle!—Who is there to know  
Its cause or sequence? Harken!—See again  
Two ancient enemies surge to and fro  
In sullen conflict—striving, each to win.

No banners floating high, nor dust, nor din,  
Nor heralds to proclaim each wary foe,  
No trace of charger squire or paladin,  
Yet swift and subtle falls the silent blow.

They struggle—one for Weal and one for Woe—  
Grim ancient enemies—they meet again!  
Their battle ground a human form—and lo!  
The prize of victory—the soul within.

## Immortality.

We ever live—thus do we ever learn.  
With toil we slowly climb from thought to thought  
Along the endless corridors of space.  
Perplexed at times, we pause, for we behold  
A maze of dark unfathomed mystery ;  
Then the young mind, untaught and all untried,  
Shudderingly cries out : “O ! what is this?”—  
And echo only answers : “What is this?”

The *What-has-been* is half of the *All-is*,  
The other half whereof is *What-will-be*;  
Each soul (a part of seeming mystery)  
Journeys forever o’er this upward course ;  
And sometime, somewhere, from an unseen height,  
We shall behold the apparent aimless way,  
That seems a path in everlasting night,  
Gleam with the rosy flush of breaking day.

## A Soliloquy.

Why should I heed dismay or sorrow?  
Woes come to-day—and fly to-morrow;  
Aye, life itself, is but a breath,  
And, when we pass the pale of death,  
Who knows but we, in looking back  
Upon our erring earthly track,  
May see our lives as he who smiles  
O'er memory of some early day,  
When fleeting smiles and fleeting tears  
Were mixed with fleeting hopes and fears,  
And childish task with childish play.

Why should I fame or riches borrow  
To hold to-day—to lose to-morrow?  
The laurel wreath the victor grasps  
Soon fades as does the brow it clasps;  
The sweetest song, the deed sublime,  
Re-echoing, die in endless time;  
And riches may, in years to come,  
Appear as does the gilded toy  
That won our hearts with sparkling gleams,  
That glittered in our childish dreams,  
That filled our childish minds with joy.

Then come what will—delight or sorrow,  
'Tis joy to-day and grief to-morrow ;  
With little heed our thoughts are cast  
To that eternity—the Past ;  
Why with more anxious gaze should we  
Peer deep into Futurity?  
Aye, we are weak, our sight is dim,  
Our puny thoughts are lightly traced,  
So lightly traced in shifting sand—  
Life's fateful ever-changing strand,  
Where all that is, is soon effaced.

### The Heritage.

To sing of life, of love, of death—  
To feel the fulness of them all,  
To trace the faint uncertain call  
That wanders from the lips of Faith,  
To loiter near the silent gate  
Where hides the face of Mystery,  
To flaunt the dreams of Theory  
Before the scornful eyes of Fate—  
Such is the poet's heritage  
And these the tasks wise Heaven sends  
That Progress still may have her friends  
In every land—in every age.

## Two Voyagers.

All heedless of the tossing roaring flood,  
That foams and frets within the narrow gorge  
'Twixt Birth and Death, he trimmed his fragile bark,  
And with no look to left or right, where loom  
The barren crags of How and Where and Why,  
With steadfast gaze that saw or seemed to see  
A quiet harbor bathed in peaceful light,  
He crossed the angry gulf and disappeared  
Among the shadows of the unknown sea.

Another paused to view the murky waste,  
To mark the curious eddies in the flood ;  
He sought to fathom its perplexities,  
To sound the depths, and mete the sullen force ;  
He tried to scale those bleak and slippery crags  
Where gather veils of dense low-hanging cloud ;  
Again and yet again he clambered up,  
Only to fall more bruised and sick at heart.  
His bark was wrecked and in the deepening gloom  
He bowed his head, nor heeded where the drift  
Should bear his sailless hulk—yet soon he crossed,  
And fell o'er both, the shadows of the sea.

---

What do the waves—the little waves say,  
Chasing each other so merrily?  
With sunshine and shadow ever at play,  
Chasing each other so merrily;  
Crested and crowned with glittering spray,  
Their white caps flashing afar o'er the bay  
With jewels of white, with jewels of light,  
Chasing each other so merrily.

The little waves whisper—here at my feet—  
Chasing each other so merrily,  
Whisper their voices, softly and sweet,  
Chasing each other so merrily:  
“The storm may buffet, the storm may beat,  
To-morrow, again in the harbor we meet,  
The clouds pass away, the sunbeams will play,  
Chasing us, chasing us merrily.”

## Within.

“Near is as near to God as any Far,  
And Here is just the same deceit as There.”

*Le bon Richard.*

It seems, in some still far-off glen,  
Where winds a crystal mountain-stream,  
Where, draped in snow-white purity,  
The mountains high in heaven gleam,  
That there the weary Soul would find  
The harmony for which she sighs ;  
Ah, could we go, my love, and heal  
Our wounds, our woes, our blinded eyes !  
A sad Voice whispers : “No, not there—  
No spot on earth is free from care.”

It seems, in that great dome above,  
Where, twinkling in unbounded space  
The silent stars are looking down  
Upon this noisy ill-kept place,  
That there the weary Soul would find  
The harmony for which she sighs ;  
Ah, could we go, my love, and heal  
Our wounds, our woes, our blinded eyes !  
The Voice replies : “No child, not there—  
No star above is free from care.”

It seems that somewhere—near or far  
In unknown climes, are unknown lands ;  
Perchance, beyond some mist-veiled sea,  
A happy isle with golden sands  
Lies hidden, where the Soul may find  
The harmony for which she sighs ;  
Ah, could we go, my love, and heal  
Our wounds, our woes, our blinded eyes !  
Again the Voice : “Search everywhere,  
There is no *Place* but has its care.”

Then said the Voice : “Look to thy Soul ;  
Learn well the lesson of to-day,  
That, as the years to ages roll,  
The essence, sleeping in the clay  
Thou callest thine, may bud and bloom  
To somewhere crown a perfect flower ;  
From days of toil and nights of gloom  
Is born, at last, a happy hour ;  
Look to thy Soul, for only there  
Doth hide the charm to banish care.”

### A Wheel of Fortune.

A wheel of fortune, blue and green,  
A mighty wheel of sea and land,  
Forever turned by a mighty hand—  
A mighty hand, unknown—unseen—  
By the throng that plays on the blue and green—  
A jangling motley band.

Winners and losers, side by side ;  
Some playing with fantastic greed,  
Some listlessly—with little heed,  
Some trampled by the human tide ;  
Winners and losers, side by side,  
Careless of thought and deed.

Numerous prizes deck the board—  
Prizes of pleasure wealth and fame,  
Kept by a fair and fickle dame  
Who flings away her golden hoard  
On knave and clown—about the board  
All are to her the same.

Yet, each his winnings must return,  
For Fortune's treasures Death defends ;  
He calls to us, and straightway sends  
The gems for which our fancies burn  
Back to her hand. All we return,  
For Fortune—only lends.

Is he a winner?—he who holds  
These few brief days a shining toy  
That time will blacken with alloy,  
Or he whose action nobler moulds  
The game of life, whose arm upholds  
What error would destroy?

Yet, something each of us must gain,  
Is vaguely felt as we commence—  
Is vaguely felt, till passing hence,  
We join that still mysterious train ;  
What shall we keep of that we gain?  
Perhaps—experience.

## Punkin-Seed.

You bet, its cur'us—all this here ;  
That punkin knows just what he needs—  
And gets it too. Yes, every year,  
As I go plantin' punkin seeds,  
I think : "Inside that little shell  
So smooth and white 's a little cuss  
Knows more 'n me"—fer I can't tell,  
How, without any noise er fuss,  
An insignif'cant dried-up thing  
As a punkin seed 'll go to work  
With a little sunshine dirt and rain,  
With never a kick, er growl, er shirk,  
And build a punkin vine, and load  
It all with punkins—plump and yellor ;  
Jest look at that one by the road—  
Yes—Punkin-seed's a cur'us feller.

It's sech strange doin's—all this here ;  
That Punkin-seed beneath our feet  
Jest chuckled to old Earth : "My dear  
We'll build some punkins hard to beat."  
He didn't stop to rest er fret,  
Er even grumble at the weather,  
But pitched right in with : "Now you bet,  
What Earth and I can't do together  
In showin' up the punkin-line,  
Ain't worth the doin'!" And it seems  
When I look at that punkin-vine,  
Which even grows into my dreams  
Loaded with punkins plump and yellor,  
That Punkin-seed meant what he said,  
And is a mighty bustlin' feller.

It's strange and cur'us—all this here—  
Where every punkin seems to know  
Jest what he's doin'; mighty queer  
These men of learnin' here below,  
So full of art and politics,  
Religion, science, travel, law,  
And all sech elevatin' tricks,  
And sech a chance to use the jaw  
With telerphone and phonergraph,  
That'll talk ten mile er more away,  
And pray and preach, er sing and laugh—  
It seems these fellers in some way  
Would try to get on speakin' terms  
With Punkin-seed. Whoever can  
So introduce himself and squirms  
His way into the punkin-plan,  
And then'll build a punkin-vine  
Loaded with punkins plump and yeller,  
Will bring a'reg'lar punkin shine  
Upon his name—the lucky feller!

So strange and cur'us—all this here ;  
Who knows what Punkin-seed might tell?—  
He hears the secrets whispered near  
Of rain and sun ; besides, to dwell  
There in the earth, to make your bed  
And dream and work beneath the sod—  
So near the silence of the dead,  
So near the artist hand of God,  
So free from care, so full of life,  
So confident that all is well ;  
We critters, here in mortal strife,  
Can't guess what Punkin-seed might tell.  
Say—jest look down there by the road  
And see them punkins plump and yellor—  
And tell me if you ever knowed  
That he was such a cur'us feller.

### The Castle of Thought.

There towers a castle, high  
Above the upper air ;  
Piercing the star-gemmed sky,  
Gleaming so white, so fair.  
“Let us climb, my soul,” said I,  
“To the parapets on high,  
Above the upper air—  
Climb, till we faint or die,  
And find the treasure there.”

Thro' labyrinths of night,  
Thro' corridors of light,  
Ascending day by day,  
Thro' mazes dim, thro' mazes bright,  
Regardless of time's steady flight,  
We thread the toil-worn way.

“O, we have striven long  
To gain the topmost stair !  
’Tis surely near, my soul,  
Behold these halls—how fair !  
’Tis surely near, my soul,  
We feel the glories there.”

Aloft we lift our eyes  
Filled with expectant light ;  
Far up—thro' purple haze—  
Above our fancy's flight—  
Above our reason's gaze,  
Still gleam the walls of white.

We shall climb the stairs of Thought—

Yes—forever ;

We shall find the treasure sought—

Yes—forever ;

“Let us climb, O soul !” say I,

“We shall not faint—nor die,

For Love and Hope on high

Dwell forever—

Yes—forever.”

### Dreams and Reality.

What mortal knows, in this strange life of ours,  
That which is false from that which bears the truth?  
Can part the dream from the reality?  
For stern realities, adown the past,  
Gather about themselves the misty hue  
Of dreams and sink into oblivion ;  
While many dreams, so shadowy and faint,  
Dwelling within the daring dreamer's brain,  
Gather in clearness with the passing years  
Until a long-sought principle is proved ;  
Then men rejoice and say: "What seemed a dream  
Was the still whisper of reality."

### Midnight.

The somber heavens form a pall ;  
Night-voices moan across the lea ;  
All seems a wilderness to me  
With midnight brooding over all.

For Faith is dead—slain in the gloom ;  
The Earth—wrapped in a mourning robe—  
Whirls on. O ! why, on this dark globe—  
This vast and unfamiliar room—

Why dwell we here? Alas ! my soul,  
What means this labor we have found,  
Here where the shadows gather round,  
With unknown death the only goal?

Come, let us search again the dust  
And that gray silence overhead—  
So like the silence of the dead—  
To find a voice that we may trust.

But what avails it? All is still ;  
No hint, no whisper of reply,  
Save from the night wind moaning by  
About the hollow and the hill.

Yet, o'er the shadows of the mind,  
Sometimes I find one little ray  
There struggling from some far-off day ;  
As he who hath been ever blind—

Finds sometime that his darkened sight  
Is crossed by something new and strange,  
As, flashing thro' his night, doth range  
A tiny ray of rosy light.

### The May.

Now hearken, my children, I pray,

To a quaint little song of the May ;

Her praises the birds in their rapture are singing—  
O'er hilltops and valleys their anthems are ringing ;  
From fruitful old Earth her fair flowers are springing ;

She comes in her beauty to-day,  
And manifold gifts to us all she is bringing—  
This generous queen of the May.

From afar comes the beautiful May ;

Ah, could she be with us always !

So brief are her visits we scarcely remember  
How charming she is, for the chilly November  
Comes stealing along with his brother—December—  
And carries her far—far—away ;

Ah ! where does he hide her—the crafty November—  
Where hides he the queen of the May ?

This question so vexed me, to-day

I asked the fair queen of the May

To tell me (in confidence) where she was sleeping  
While dark dreary Winter o'er cold earth was creeping  
And Jack Frost his harvest of snow-flakes was reaping ;

She laughingly answered me nay—

“That secret,” she whispered, “is safe in my keeping.”

Ah, wise is the queen of the May !

“ ’Tis better,” said beautiful May,  
“ That I am not with you alway ;  
For beauty is fairest when beauty is fleeting ;  
And what can be sweeter than joyfully greeting  
A friend whom you love ? Ah ! yes, dear is the meeting  
With loved ones that dwell far away.”

“ ’Tis better—yes better,” said Echo, repeating  
The words of the queen of the May.

“ This lesson I teach,” said the May—  
“ ’Tis hard work that gives zest to play ;  
’Tis the cold and the snow and the dark dreary hours  
That brighten the beauty of sunshine and flowers ;  
December will bring you more love for my bowers  
While sleeping I lie, far away ;  
The thorns are our true friends as well as the flowers.”  
Thus spake the wise queen of the May.

Then welcome once more, dearest May—  
Thrice welcome—tho’ brief is your stay ;  
Yes, all things forever are coming and going,  
With Time’s mystic river is everything flowing,  
But whither and whence is beyond mortal knowing ;  
O, tell me, wise May-queen, I pray !  
“ Be patient, be patient, the harvest is growing,  
Sometime you will reap,” said the May.

## The Awakening.

### I.

Ah—could we gain again that Night so still!—  
Afar from doubts that sting—from joys that thrill;  
Once more unsought—unheeding—in the arms  
Of Slumber clasped, with unawakened will.

So soft the couch of that still night, long past;  
So sweet the sleep, alas!—too sweet to last;  
For out into the streets of Time and Place,  
By prowling Wisdom, are our spirits cast.

As mortals, overworn with care and dread,  
Gaze with a wistful eye upon the dead,  
Or turn a saddened thought to happy days,—  
So dream we of our peaceful long-lost bed;

That couch, where strayed no breath of loss or gain,  
No hint of life or death, of bliss or pain;  
Again we may not find it, tho' we die—  
Aye—thro' all Heaven we may search in vain!

## II.

Amidst this earthly strife to live and know—  
These days that deal us happiness and woe—  
There falls a shadow of the old kind Sleep,  
Hinting of that fair silence long-ago.

How happens it that Rest—itself complete—  
Should broken be for cruel cold and heat  
Of this sad journey o'er a troubled earth,  
Whereon we falter with unsteady feet?

Fell there, like music, an enchanting word—  
So strange, that ev'n the dullest sleeper heard—  
So clear, its echoes rang from depth to depth—  
So sweet, that ev'n the drowsiest sleeper stirred?—

Speaking the beauty of a magic land  
Of life and action working near at hand?—  
Haunting our slumber with its siren note  
Till here, awakened, on the earth we stand?

## III.

This earth—this waste of planet and of sun,  
Where cheerily our labor is begun,  
Where, dreaming vainly of a harvest-time,  
We learn to hope, and leave our tasks undone.

This earth, whereon we bravely work and sing,  
This earth—where half in shadow yet we cling  
And boldly say: “At last will come the light,”—  
Ah, should the morrow nought but darkness bring!

This life—wherein we see and seeth not,  
This life—stained with obscurity and blot,  
Where Memory babbles of one little hour  
With half of all eternity forgot.

This life—so vague, so barren, and so brief,  
That leaves us fallen like an autumn leaf;  
This life—that teaches what we cannot learn  
And fills us yearning with a sacred grief.

And still to Life we give a faithful trust;  
With all his sternness, he may yet be just;  
We knoweth not the fulness of his heart  
For he doth deal in something more than dust.

## IV.

A cold gray stranger prowls about the earth ;  
Along his pathway die all song and mirth ;  
So carelessly we view him, far away,  
Till some sad morn, he sits beside the hearth.

Away with him, we see our loved ones go ;  
To where and what, no mortal brain can know ;  
Yet, marking closely that mysterious tread,  
Who says he seems not more a friend than foe?

Familiar faces greet us here no more—  
Their voices vanished with the forms they wore ;  
Yet, hark ! An echo drifts across the deep—  
Perchance an echo from that unknown shore—

The whispered echo of a voiceless wraith—  
An echo— murmuring of hope and faith :  
“O, mortals ! wherefore shrink ye from the gaze  
And shun the kindly guiding hand of Death?”

Grim Death ! Will you give back to us the rest  
And quiet of that sleep, which seems so blest  
Amidst this turmoil of the phantom years  
And all the throbbings of this doubtful quest?

## V.

“Peace, weary pilgrim ! Wherefore should you try  
To bear the burdens of th’ eternal sky?  
What matters it?—thro’out its destined round  
The wheel must travel, though you laugh or cry.

“Peace, weary pilgrim ! Wherefore should you pain  
The anxious heart with searching that is vain?—  
• Striving to store the mystery of *All*  
Within a corner of the little brain !

“Peace, weary pilgrim ! Cease your sorrowing,  
And hearken to the melodies that bring  
Across the valley hints of morning light  
And promise of that far-off hidden Spring.”

**Strangers.**

Violet, down in the dew,  
Let me look you thro' and thro';  
Tell me—who and what are you?

Do you pilfer from the skies,  
Or from some fair maiden's eyes,  
Beauty, glossed with azure dyes?

Do you long intend to stay,  
Or will your gay mother—May,  
Take you with her far away?

Oft my patience have you tried  
With these secrets that you hide  
Smiling on your green hill-side.

Violet—the cunning elf—  
Answers from her mossy shelf:  
“First, please tell me of yourself.”

## The Soliloquy of Mother Earth.

### Prologue.

One day, as I lay dozing on the broad  
Life-giving bosom of our Mother Earth,  
Warm with the glowing rays of summer's sun,  
I found her musing—as she often does—  
Yes, musing in her quaint and quiet way.  
Presuming some of all the many forms  
That dwell here in the sunshine of her love  
May wish to know the tenor of her thoughts—  
(Tho', childlike, we are careless of her care)  
I have recorded this soliloquy  
Of our huge common mother.

### The Soliloquy.

Full oft, as I go wand'ring on thro' space,  
Have I been thinking of that child of mine—  
My wayward gifted and much troubled son—  
My child named Man—best loved of all the brood  
That calls me mother. In dim ages past,  
As I took notice of his infant ways,

I saw in him an enterprising mind  
Abounding with strange whims and grievous faults ;  
He has improved somewhat, but still is prone  
To thrive upon his kind ; and, youthlike, loves  
Too much the glitter of Hypocrisy,  
Disdainful of the honest eyes of Truth ;—  
Which sore doth vex his mother.

When young he cared not what his shelter was  
Nor how he dined ; he, infantlike, believed  
In quantity much more than quality.  
I notice now how daintily he feeds ;  
I fear 'tis caused by that strange latest fad  
Which, he has hinted, is the proper cure  
For those who suffer from antiquity ;  
But civilization seems to have its ills,  
And I so long have clung unto the Old  
(Altho' I know the Old brings forth the New)  
I take not kindly to new-fangled ways  
Unsuited to a mother.

Sadly inquisitive has he become ;  
He peers and gropes into the quiet nooks  
Where hide the secret treasures of my life—  
The treasures of a ripe experience  
That I have gathered toilsfully in space—  
(Thanks to the kindness of the wizard—Time.)  
I never thought, when in the glow of youth,  
To rear a child so strangely curious ;  
I mean my treasures for his benefit  
Altho' he oft displays a reckless waste—  
Destroying much in the raw haste of youth ;  
Yet I forgive him (thinking of his worth)  
Because I am his mother.

About his education I'm concerned ;  
I watch his thousand droll experiments  
As he proceeds along the doubtful path  
That guides him to the realm where Wisdom dwells ;  
What theories he to himself unfolds !—  
'Tis true, at times unto distraction's bounds  
He drives me with his theoretic whims ;  
He tries my temper, most severely too,  
Experimenting with electric force—  
That subtle soothing tonic that I use  
Whene'er my nervous system loses tone—  
A frequent trial of mothers !

The other members of our solar group—  
The children of our fiery father—Sun,  
My brother and my sister planet-worlds,  
Have not escaped his scientific pranks ;  
And e'en the strangers of far-reaching space,  
So distant that they dwell beyond my ken,  
Are objects for his speculative thought ;  
Thus, when a comet wanders from afar  
(Those unkempt gypsies of the Universe)  
And pitches camp within our neighborhood,  
Then does my child remark the foreign air,  
The tattered garb and the eccentric way—  
Displaying that vast curiosity  
Which so disturbs his mother.

He vainly cries to know the cause of all—  
To know the why and wherefore of all things,  
And often gropes and flounders in the depths  
Of some grotesque and superstitious creed  
Where grow the weeds of cruelty and fear ;  
Forgetful, in his youthful heedlessness,  
That *charity* and *love* are more than creeds,  
And that this mighty universal plan  
Is one of changeless law, where each and all  
Are ever toiling toward Perfection's light  
With Evolution's torch to show the way.  
Alas, the woes of mothers !

'Tis oft my wish when noting his mad pranks,  
That he may learn of Moderation's gift—  
For many a bump and bruise does he inflict  
Upon himself by his impetuous deeds.  
Alas! it tries a loving mother's heart  
To see the sternness of the lessons taught  
In that rough school of old Experience;  
Though, understood, Experience is kind  
And deals with each according to his needs;  
Man will be made to love this dark-brow'd friend  
And know the value of his harshest moods  
That are so painful to the mind untried;  
Some find the love of grim Experience  
Is deep as is the mother's.

His future? No, I care not to reveal  
The cherished dreams within my mother-breast;  
This much I say: that if his virtues lead  
Him safely throughout Folly's many snares,  
If he falls not in Degradation's depths  
When goaded by the lash of Selfishness,  
Nor turns to right or left, but ever strives  
To gain the portals of that fair domain  
Where shine the lights of Charity and Love,

Then will he be a comfort and a joy ;  
A bliss complete will animate my breast  
When I may say with pride : This is my son,  
Behold him in his full development ;  
He worked his way thro' night, amid the ills  
Of suns and stars to Wisdom's happy land,  
Where now he stands erect—the grand ideal  
Of his fond foolish mother.

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Ever afar from the golden West  
Our Mother Earth is flying  
Bearing the children of her breast—  
Bearing the children she loves best—  
Ever afar from the golden West  
Where day is dying—dying.

Ever afar from the golden West  
Our Mother Earth is flying ;  
Bearing us all to peace and rest—  
Bearing us all to regions blest—  
Ever afar from the golden West  
Where day is dying—dying.

### The Pilgrims.

Along an uphill worn and dusty road  
We slowly move, nor can we understand  
Why clad and cloaked so deep in dust we stand,  
Amid the shadows of an unknown land—  
Amid the shadows of an unknown road.

A winding road—and tho' we turn and peer—  
Seeking its backward vistas to retrace  
And Memory aids us with her shining face,  
We see but little—some still resting place,—  
Perchance a flower that is nodding near.

A winding road—and tho' afar we gaze—  
Striving to scan that distance dim ahead,  
To mark if smooth or rough the path we tread,  
Dense mists, perhaps in mercy from o'erhead,  
Descend and hide the scenes of coming days.

A winding road—with none to tell us why  
Our feet began this faltering uphill work.  
Did some unrest within our spirits lurk  
Which only this rough journey—this o'erwork  
Would banish? Would we knew before we die.

We mourn for that lost realm wherein we dwelt  
At peace, content,—where reigned the Queen of Calm ;  
Perchance she turned us from the Land of Balm,  
Vexed by some restless dream or fleeting qualm  
That fell on us, because we ne'er had felt.

Ah, subtle strange revenge !—this plot laid deep—  
Binding us serfs and slaves to Senses five  
That smirk and sneer : “Poor slaves—to be alive,  
To feel, to see, to hope, to fear, to strive !”—  
Alas for him who vexed the Queen of Sleep !

He feels—and finds how powerful is pain ;  
He sees—and learns that he is more than blind—  
His eyes perceive the husk, the shell, the rind,  
Yet vainly search to find the Master-mind  
That fashions substance o'er and o'er again.

He hopes—and yet knows not for what he hopes ;  
He fears—and knows not what it is he fears ;  
He is the sport of idle Smiles and Tears,  
Delusive Happiness his being sears,  
From darkness into darkness—thus he gropes.

He strives—toiling with patience up the steep,  
Thro'out the cheerless days—toiling in vain—  
Some barren little summit to attain,  
Hoping a glimpse of Heaven there to gain ;  
Alas for him who vexed the Queen of Sleep !

A winding road—and will Death tell us why—  
This half-known Death, so chill, so strange to see—  
Why this dim path? Why all this mystery?  
Why we this way must seek our destiny?  
Death turns a close-veiled face—but no reply.

Yet hearken !—comes the answer clear and low :  
“Before the spirit knew the winding road,  
Before the spirit bowed beneath the load,  
Before Life drove ye fiercely 'neath the goad  
From that fair Slumberland, ye ne'er did know—

Th' eternal Purpose, moving ever higher,  
That shapes all things; 'twas *That*, which dwelt in ye,  
Urged ye from Sleep out into Mystery—  
And thus to Death where ye shall truly see ;  
So, Godlike, do ye move to God's desire.”

### A Man vs. the World.

A little man battles a great big world—  
A bewildering sight it is to behold ;  
Caught in its mesh he is whisked and whirled  
Thro' the summer heat and wintry cold ;  
Sport for the heedless buffeting years,  
Tossed by wind, by wave, and storm,  
Palpitating with hopes and fears,  
To be food at last for the sluggish worm.  
A curious thing—to be whisked and whirled  
About in the clutch of a great big world.

A little man battles a great big world—  
But surely 'tis not at his own request ;  
Rudely awakened and carelessly hurled  
Out in the mill he is put to the test.  
Aye, strive as he may with his utmost might,  
The world in the end all stakes will claim ;  
At best he can make but a losing fight,  
Be brave to the finish, and then die game ;  
A curious thing—to be thus hurled  
Out in the fight with a great big world.

A little man battles a great big world ;  
Beginning with courage firm and high ;  
His flaunting banner, aloft unfurled,  
Floats in the blue of a cloudless sky.  
He thinks the world must go his way  
If he be steadfast, bold and strong ;  
But sleepless night and scornful day  
Soon teach him where his creed is wrong.  
'Tis rather rough to be tossed and twirled  
About in the clutch of a great big world.

A little man battles a great big world—  
What use in the struggle?—who cares to know  
How bold he may be to face the world?—  
How brave he may be to bear his woe?  
Is there about him an unseen throng—  
Faces, invisible, watching the fray?—  
Silent applause if he is strong?—  
Murmurs of sorrow if he gives way?—  
Waiting to welcome him when he is whirled  
Afar from the grasp of this great big world?

## The Envoy.

Once—long ago—she plucked a rose  
And gave it me and said :  
“Whatever portion Fate bestows—  
Whatever paths you tread—  
Henceforward let this fair rose be  
A messenger to you from me.”

Strange, is it not?—Altho' 'twere vain  
To search the wide world o'er—  
Her face and form to see again—  
Altho,' forevermore,  
The earth will hold of her no trace—  
Yet, *where there blooms a rose's face*  
*Or where there drifts a rose's breath,—*  
*Across the silence wrought by Death*  
*There comes the whisper: “Let it be*  
*A messenger to you from me.”*

## Daisy-Secrets.

Down in the vale, the daisies dwell—  
Children of Summer's fold ;  
Learning *their* lessons of life, as well,  
Building their crowns as of old—  
A halo of petals, all milk-white  
About a center of gold.

Tell me, ye mighty men of clay—  
Ye mighty men, who hold  
That Earth whirls solely, night and day,  
For those in human mould :  
Just *why* and *how* these daisies build  
Their crowns of white and gold.

### The Lesson of Death.

Worn was I—sad and worn and sick at heart  
From pondering o'er and o'er this ponderous scene  
Of earth and stars—the depths of time and space—  
The countless shapes and changing forms of life—  
The thousand riddles vexing to the brain  
Of eager man.

“Ah God!,” said I, “for peace,  
For sleep—deep sleep, oblivion and night—  
For, in this glare and blare of earth and sense,  
There seems no object worthy of the game—  
No steady purpose moving toward an end.

“This earth seems sometimes all one vast caprice—  
Her wizard forces working—all for naught;  
Or, if for some result, so far away  
In time and wrapped so close in mystery,  
That he who seeks for comfort with clear eye  
Undimmed by superstitious prejudice,  
And fain would know the honest face of Truth,  
Regardless of old threadbare usages,  
Is hurled back on himself; while all things seem  
To mock him for his blindness.

“There above

It is the same—worlds builded of the clay,  
In warp and woof the same as this poor star—  
With all the tricks and tragedies of earth ;  
If not the same, a little better or  
A little worse—perfection nowhere found.  
And yet, above, below, a thousand things  
Speak, urging on to question solve and prove—  
Till, faint and old, worn out with much defeat,  
We sadly turn to Faith for better things.”

Thus had I toiled and sought thro’ weary days  
Thus was I musing at the midnight hour ;  
When, entering noiselessly the open door,  
There came a child in slowly from the night—  
A childish serious face—as Cupid’s grown  
More beautiful with thought.

A moment passed

In revery then he spake : “Yes, mortal, I  
Am come to comfort thee. My name is Love,  
And I am here to-night in serious mood,  
For thou hast need of knowledge that is mine.  
Long have I watched thy weary bootless quest—  
Wishing to speak and comfort, but, Alas!—  
Thou knewest not my voice, thou wast not ripe,  
Thou couldst not feel the lesson I would teach.

“Aye, mortals look on Love, and smile and say :  
‘A rosy boy is he among the flowers’—  
But frequently I come in different garb,  
And then they know me not, and shrink and weep,  
For they look only at my sable dress  
And know not that the rosy boy—their friend—  
Is hid within—but more of this anon.

“Why dost thou vex thyself with space and time?—  
Infinities thou canst not comprehend ;  
Thy mind hath bounds, infinities have none,—  
Were thy mind infinite, all would be plain.  
This would I say to thee : Ye mortals see  
But half of things, thinking ye view the whole ;  
This Universe is twofold, everywhere  
That aught of substance lives, there o’er it dwells  
A mind to govern.

“All these varying forms  
Of life-thrilled substance, known to mortal eyes,  
Are but the means by which invisible mind  
Attaineth growth—for much of mind is young  
And ne’er has found a cultivated state,  
But ramps and roars—all hurricane and flood—  
Causing a thousand vagaries ; or yet  
It builds in blindness—see the forest-trees—  
Where one would thrive ye find an infant ten ;—  
Aye, much of mind is blind, unskilled, untaught ;  
Yet, if ye view it in the rightful way,  
Ye find all needful to the perfect plan.

“Ye see that mind which is uncouth and gross,  
Working its way thro’ lowest dullest forms ;  
Learning its lessons slowly—for its good.  
Whate’er is beautiful is the fair work  
Wrought by a fairer mind.

Thus do I draw  
Near to the question of thyself—the mind  
Which works thro’ thee, that mind which yet is blind,  
But having gained a nearness to the light  
Beholds its blindness.

“Hast thou seen a tree  
That bears a scanty small and bitter fruit,  
Taken from out the wilds of thorn and brake ;  
Its seed watched over by the same kind hand,  
Until from many generations’ care  
Hath sprung a fruit, so rich and beautiful,  
Thou wouldst not guess the crabbed parent-tree?

“Thus doth the God thou canst not comprehend  
So move the mind that toils thro’ lower life—  
Guiding it on to larger hope and sense ;  
Ev’n as the gardener cultivates the tree,  
So God doth do to all.

’Tis thus He leads  
The will of that strange wanderer within ;  
And as His gross, or wild, or beautiful  
Doth dwell in thee, so wilt thou live and move—  
Thine actions in accordance with thy mind—  
Working thy way along the upward road.

“When grown aweary of the house of clay,  
Thou seekest wisdom more than that of earth,  
Or needest what is not in mortal life,  
Then cometh Death—this Death so shunned by men ;  
Ah ! they who know him smile at all such fear ;  
They look thro’ all the chill and sable robes  
And see the rosy boy among the flowers,  
For Love is Death, and Death is always Love,  
And Love is the begotten Son of God.”

He ceased, and turning, passed the open door,  
Whereat I followed, peering thro’ the gloom,  
Hoping to hear again the prophet-voice ;  
The stars were shining and the sinking moon  
O’er-spread with silver splendor all the West ;  
But he had vanished ; yet, adown the night,  
And lightly borne as if from far away,  
There fell a chorus heavenly attuned,  
Wherein the voices of a multitude  
Did rise and fall in harmony divine ;  
Singing in greeting sweet to Love and Death.

---

“Love and Death—we give thee welcome—  
    Child of life and light ;  
O’er the troubled wayside sowing  
    Blessings infinite.  
Child of Love—to mortals clinging ;  
Child of Death—to mortals bringing  
Rest and Peace. We greet thee, singing  
    In the happy night.

“Love and Death—we give thee welcome ;  
    There is no abyss ;  
Thou hast guided thro’ the shadow  
    To completer bliss ;  
Without thee, the heavens shining—  
Countless worlds in space reclining,  
Filled with life of God’s designing,  
    Sink to nothingness.”

### Nature's Hypocrisy.

We never know what quietness conceals  
Nor how a fair appearance may deceive,  
For Nature often plays us false. She hides  
The fatal germ beneath a blushing cheek ;  
She gives unto the dread volcanic slope  
A mantle soft with grass and sweet with flowers ;  
Her stars shine brightest just before the storm ;  
She sows in every dell her strange deceits ;  
We find the serpent in her fairest nooks ;  
She pads the tiger's claw and lights his way ;  
She veils with oily word and polished mien  
The selfishness unworthy of the brute ;  
And there are hours of darkness for the souls  
That light the world with kindliness and love.  
We never know the ground beneath our feet—  
We never know the pathway that we tread.

### Her Journey.

When first she trod this road of life,  
Fair Innocence came to her side  
And said: "Child, I will be thy guide,  
Tho' brief the time that I abide with thee."

As farther on her way she went,  
Love, flower-crowned, came to her side  
And said: "Child, I will be thy guide,  
Tho' brief the time that I abide with thee."

And then she walked her lonely way  
With Sorrow ever at her side  
Who said: "Child, I will be thy guide,  
Till Death shall come will I abide with thee."

“Hush! ’tis but a Little While.”

Hush! ’tis but a little while ;  
This day, this hour, the spell may break ;  
This dream of earth may fade away,  
The drowsy soul spring up awake  
Filled with the light of clearer day.

Hush! ’tis but a little while,  
Why heed to-day’s discordant tones?—  
Why heed the dust, the din, the fear?—  
Why vex the heart with idle moans  
When rest and silence dwell so near?

Hush! ’tis but a little while  
And we may know what Earth doth mean,  
As change leads on with steady hand  
O’er mystic ways, o’er paths unseen,  
To portals of a strange new land.

### Bicycle Song.

Hurrah for the wheel—the flying wheel!

My love, my life, my steed of steel!

Glimmering bright

In the morning light,

Gleaming and glancing

Dashing and dancing;

Swift as a bird or an arrow's flight.

Hurrah for the wheel—the flying wheel!

My love, my life, my steed of steel!

Now gliding down a valley grade,

Now skimming by the river—

Where willows bend o'er grassy banks

And aspens nod and quiver;

Beneath the woodland's quiet shade;

By sleepy hamlets quaint and staid,—

Thus on and on by glen and glade,

Oh, could we ride forever!

Hush—a churchyard's 'neath the hill—  
Ah, Death, what change you bring!  
Ah, can it be!—that cold and still,  
Deep in the grave, shall sleep the thrill  
Of life and love? No, Death may chill  
The body, yet I cling  
Unto the skirts of hope and faith—  
A higher song they sing.

For who can doubt that all is well—  
Or heed the spur of care?—  
When life and hope and beauty dwell  
In Nature everywhere,—  
Beauty—in every field and dell  
Fresh with morning air;  
No evil shall my spirit quell  
Amid these scenes so fair.

Long live the wheel—the noble wheel!  
My love, my life, my steed of steel!

Glimmering bright

In the morning light;

Gleaming and glancing,

Dashing and dancing,

Swift as a bird or an arrow's flight.

Long live the wheel—the noble wheel!

My love, my life, my steed of steel!

### Reminiscences.

There is a something in the dreary wood  
Swaying with tempestuous winds of night,  
There is a something in the riotous flood  
Downward sweeping with resistless might,  
That speaks to me, and wakens in my blood  
A sympathetic thrill of old delight.

Like fancies of our half-forgotten dreams  
A vision rises—of a rock-bound shore,  
Where thro' the night the white-capped billow gleams  
And giants of the tempest rave and roar;  
While something stirring in my memory, seems  
To thrill to echoes of a song of yore.

---

Perchance in some mad frolic far in Time,  
My spirit, bounded now by human clay,  
Was whirled thro' some chaotic wreck sublime,  
That left its impress to this later day.

## The Eternal Feminine.

Dedicated to H. W. H.—M. D.

### PREFACE.

You say, Hal, that up-to-date human femininity, regarded from a physical standpoint, is—"a fragile article." In fact, to quote your language: "They are poor material—about ninety-nine per cent suffer from constipation." Notwithstanding this sad handicap, it cannot be denied that we find a certain melancholy pleasure in their society, as well as a profound interest (strictly professional of course) in the puzzling traits of character which they exhibit. Something of this is embodied in the following poetical morsel which I have taken the liberty of dedicating to you.

---

At evening, when the sunset glows  
And whispering waves their secrets tell,  
Behold—she comes—our foe of foes—  
Fair Isabel!

The breezes, passing near, disclose  
A hint of where the violets dwell—  
(In perfumed ribbon, lace and hose,)

Rare Isabel!

And on her breast a red—red—rose—  
(She chooses all her weapons well,  
For hearts she knows as no man knows,)

Wise Isabel!

Behold her when rebellion grows  
And bravely we would say farewell—  
How lightly, then, she lays our woes—

Kind Isabel!

For man must reap what woman sows,  
(Recall that old Adamic sell,)  
He cannot see beyond her nose—

Sly Isabel!

How lightly on her way she goes—  
How lightly she all hope can quell—  
Upon her breast a red—red—rose,

Fair Isabel!

---

As for her predisposition to rag-time melodies,  
caramels and postscripts—this we will discuss later.

## The Clock.

Hear the old clock singing  
In solemn measured beat,  
As tiny minutes hasten  
On silent winged feet ;  
“The time is flying—flying—  
The days are dying—dying—  
And nearer draws the shadow  
Each mortal needs must meet.”

Hear the old clock calling  
In accents sad and slow :  
(The tiny minutes heed not  
Nor pause as on they go)  
“The time is flying—flying—  
The days are dying—dying—  
As nearer draws the shadow  
That veileth mortal woe.”

And tho' the clock be silent,  
Aye—hushed its every tone—  
The tiny fleeting minutes  
Still hurry on alone ;  
For time is flying—flying—  
And days are dying—dying—  
Throughout the great Forever  
Till Earth and all are gone.

To \_\_\_\_\_

You left so soon, while I must linger late  
To wrestle in this petty human strife ;  
I ask not why ; 'tis vain to hope that Fate  
Will ope her stubborn lips to speak of life.

Yes, long ago, for one brief summer morn  
Among the flowers we lingered—you and I ;  
And then you slept and left me here forlorn  
To wonder what it means to live and die.

'Twas long ago, we were but children then ;  
Yet, when at last I rest my weary feet  
And turn forever from these haunts of men,  
'Tis sweet to dream that, somehow, we shall meet.

### As of Other Days.

Oh, brother mine! As all that mortals know  
Of that which was, for some brief years, called "me"  
Is earth alone—with earth above, below,  
A stone-carved name, a passing memory;  
As Time's judicious hand has soothed the pain  
That scourged us, when apart our souls were led,  
Again I join with thee to explain  
Somewhat of those whom mortals name "the Dead."

In spirit will we meet then, by the hill—  
Dear from the memory of childhood's play,  
Dear from those earthly joys that haunt me still—  
How sweet become the dreams of yesterday!  
Again we hear the hemlock's mournful song,  
Again the sunset-glory glows and gleams,  
Again the spring returns—the feathered throng  
Is noisy as in days of youthful dreams.

Again the valley—clad in summer dress,  
The fruitful acres—ripe for boyish tasks,  
And then the autumn ! By her loveliness  
The blushing Earth the secret half unmasks  
And hints and whispers in coquettish way  
The plans of mighty Life—so new, so old ;  
Ah, would we read aright, her every May  
Proclaims the secret, Death has never told !

Here will we linger as of long ago ;  
'Tis by this grass-grown grave we learn to learn,  
For wisdom is a fruit that springs from woe—  
The harvest that dull Sorrow will return.  
Here sleeps the clay—yet it has always slept,  
As it must always sleep where'er it strays ;  
'Tis but the path o'er which each soul has crept—  
O'er which each soul must creep to larger ways.

Here sleeps the clay—it is not, ne'er was “I;”  
It is the soul alone that ever lives  
And forms alone that die—that ever die.  
It is the soul within the form, that gives  
The clay a dearness that is not its due ;  
While love grows strong thus from our having met,  
And I am always I, and You are You,  
With naught forgotten, tho' *we* oft forget.

Now here—now there—now fettered—and now free,  
As throbs the magic pulse of life and change ;  
From all that *was*, and *is*, to what *will be*—  
So does the deathless soul forever range,  
To grow from *this* to *that*, from *much* to *more*  
And ever *more*—there is no highest height ;  
And what is light to-day, ere day be o'er,  
Shall pale as dawns to-morrow's purer light.

Yet, there is night, the backward step, mischance ;  
And shadows rise as light is half withdrawn ;  
But brighter shall the beam to-morrow glance—  
More radiant seems for such, to-morrow's dawn.  
All loss is prelude to some noble gain,  
For Purpose journeys over winding ways  
Regardless how the shadows wax or wane—  
Unheeding mortal comment—blame or praise.

Ah, idle words ! Ye are for ear and brain ;—  
Oh brother mine, how dull this muffling dress  
Of earthly words ! Where mind alone doth reign  
All thought is language, and doth all express ;  
Yet, somewhat of my thought hath mixed with thine,  
Thus do you feel the life with which I thrill ;  
Here in this measured message—thine and mine—  
Together as of old—here meet we still.

## An Epitaph.

To \_\_\_\_\_

He did as men would have man do—  
Nor faltered in this earthly test ;  
His heart was honest, tried, and true ;  
With labor all his days were blest  
Until the Shadow whispered “rest.”

He had his purpose to attain—  
A purpose worthy of his clay ;  
Amid the rabble-rush for gain,  
Amid the gaudy world-display  
He sternly sought his chosen way.

He heard the babble of the fool,  
He knew the bubble-chasing throng,  
Nor lost his faith in Nature's school,  
Nor took for right a gilded wrong  
As quietly he moved along.

Nor feared he yet to have his say—  
To batter down some ancient cheat,  
But more he loved alone to stray  
Where Nature's subtler pulses beat—  
Afar from highways of deceit.

With equal care for earth and heaven—  
(For earth and stars are self-same dust)  
He made the best of what was given—  
From golden fruit to beggar's crust,  
And held that, somehow, God was just.

With charity for each and all  
From torpid king to soulless clod,  
He hoped beyond the curtain's fall  
And bore with grace life's chastening rod—  
Co-operating, thus, with God.

So did he live—so did he pass,  
What tho' none spake when he did go—  
Are not the tears wept by the grass,  
The night-wind's sorrow whispered low,  
The choicest tributes man can know?

L. of C.

## Two Sovereigns.

Earth, sky and sea—all mystery  
Enshrouding us about ;  
Within ourselves—still mystery ;  
Above—within—without—  
The silent realm of Mystery  
Where ruleth Faith and Doubt.

A king so stern—a queen so fair  
O'er earth and sky and sea,  
A strange and yet well-mated pair—  
These twain of Mystery ;  
There are no paths they may not dare  
Thro' all eternity.

The king is Doubt—the queen is Faith,  
Their subjects—you and I ;  
They reign o'er Birth, o'er Life, o'er Death,  
They reign for aye and aye ;  
We crown them with our earliest breath,  
We crown them when we die.

Cold crabbed Doubt—self-willed and blind—  
What message from the night?—  
“Oh, shadows!—born of clay and mind,  
So soon to cease your flight,  
What profit hope ye here to find  
In Life’s uncertain light?”

And hearken to the words of Faith  
The voice of Doubt to still :  
“Oh mortals! heed not what he saith,  
His days are dim and chill—  
But know that Life shall conquer Death,  
That Good shall vanquish Ill.

Such are the words of Doubt and Faith  
For all—both low and high ;  
So must we go from birth to death—  
Their subjects—you and I,  
To crown them with our earliest breath—  
To crown them when we die.

So does the realm of Mystery  
Enshroud us all about,  
While Truth afar must ever be,  
For all within, without,  
Ourselves, the earth, the sky, the sea,  
Are ruled by Faith and Doubt.

### At the Threshold.

Amid the daily toil—the routine born  
Of duty, and the swarm of petty trials  
That sting and harass us as on we pass,  
Amid the ceaseless gabble and the blind  
Half-tragic gropings of the multitude—  
Each searching for his own peculiar toy,  
Amid the clashing of vain little wills,  
And all the dust and din that vex the earth,  
When men catch, tho' but for an instant's space,  
The gleaming face of Truth, amid all these  
There sometimes comes a moment strange and sweet.

Perchance 'tis but a glance at sunset skies  
Or echo of a song of eventide,  
Perchance a memory idling from the past,  
A passing face, perchance a wildwood flower,  
Some trifle at the best—and yet it wakes  
That dreaming other self that sleeps in man ;  
Then, all the discord of a jangling world  
Grows faint and dies away, and comes a sense  
Of utter peace and perfect restfulness—  
While that which seemed of earth, is earth no more.

---

So do we feel the stirring of the soul  
And know man's fate is bounded not by years.

## Sleep—Dreams—Death.

Beloved Sleep—

Thou kindly angel of ill-fated Life—  
Bear me away unto thy fields of bliss ;  
Let Pleasure flaunt—her gauds I shall not miss,  
And Love go by, singing of his first kiss—  
Thou art more welcome—Sleep.

Mirth-loving Dreams—

Ye vagrant children of great-hearted Sleep—  
Lead me forever o'er your phantom ways ;  
Let Fortune boast—what are her fairest days  
But bubbles of earth-riches and earth-praise—  
Ye are more welcome—Dreams.

Mysterious Death—

Closely veiled sister of beloved Sleep—  
Thou, too, art kind ; thy gifts—eternal peace  
And from these days of toil and trial—release ;  
Rise when thou wilt and bid this clamor cease—  
Thou, too, art welcome—Death.

### Religion.

All men—of all conditions—seeketh God ;  
That God—so vast—impenetrable—and calm,  
Who views the unclad children of the wood  
Before their idols, and the children clad  
In fine array before their shrines—as one ;  
Who knows the prayers of every tongue and clime—  
Of every age and every form of life ;  
Who gives to all an ear and helping hand,—  
Implanting in each heart the spark divine  
That, kindling into flame, leaps forth and lights  
The way unto some temple reared by Faith.

What if it be the savage dance and fast,  
Or bigot with his creed, or atheist  
In mourning for his blindness, or the sage  
With dreams and theories—'tis all the same ;  
All hear the Master's whisper to the soul  
And answer—each in his own voice and way.

Behold that Power whose mantle falls o'er all ;  
Whose blessing goes to every heart that feels  
The mystery divine—nor cares for form  
Or method of expression ;—Who, unmoved,  
Regards in silence all these deeds of Time ;  
Whose charity is greater than all worlds ;  
And, should it be thy wish to gain that grace  
Which Heaven holds dear, heed the example given  
And follow well in thy small round of life.

### Man and Wisdom.

They come—these shadows of a season brief—  
To tenant Earth ; some rise, some sink in mire,  
Some toil, some waste, some struggle with Desire,  
And many perish like the withered leaf ;  
Some sleep, some dream, and there are some who see ;  
Some search for that which never shall be found ;  
Some sow to reap, some drudge o'er barren ground,  
While *all* are clad and cloaked in mystery.

Tho' near she ever stands—he sees her not ;  
Her brow is sad—her finger on her lips ;  
She fain would speak—but few would hear or heed,  
Her mystic tongue, to man, has ne'er been taught ;  
With mournful smile whose light the tears eclipse  
She hears his foolish noise—his boastful deed.

### Education.

Look not to men alone to teach thy heart ;  
Knowledge is subtle, varied, many-tongued ;  
Her way lies often far from ear and eye ;  
She may proclaim the highest truth and yet  
No word be writ or spoken. Follow her  
Far from the beaten path—beyond the gates—  
And out into the fields which few men tread ;  
Put by thy books, thy themes, thine old deceits  
And be alert to catch her faintest sign ;—  
For there are Masters that no man hath known,  
Voices that teach what man hath never heard,  
Prophets that see what man hath never dreamed,  
And there are vast waste places, which now seem  
Wildernesses of night and loneliness,  
Where tiny buds of promise soon will spring  
Up thro' the darkened soil, and light will come,  
Changing the desert to a garden fair  
Where men shall rest in fuller hope and peace.

---

There is a little hollow in the hills—  
Where breezes pause and vagrant clouds drift by  
And leafy voices murmur to the sky,  
Where rare musicians sing—unknown—unseen—  
While fairy courts of many a flower-queen  
Hold revelry.

There—in the little hollow of the hills—  
The Artist lingers whom no eye doth know ;  
Who holds the secret of the sunset's glow,  
The rose-bud's perfume and the lily's grace,  
And fills with beauty each uplifted face  
That hopes below.

There—in the little hollow of the hills—  
The Master cometh whom no ear hath heard ;  
Whose wisdom every living heart hath stirred ;  
Who shapes the destinies of heaven and earth,  
And reads the mystery of death and birth—  
Yet speaks no word.

There—in the little hollow of the hills—  
As evening shadows linger in caress—  
Sweet angel-voices draweth near to bless,  
Fair angel-forms stray thro' the twilight grove,  
And every life hears whispered Heaven's love  
And loveliness.

## From the Silence.

Beloved—Beloved—Beloved—  
Oh hearken!—for all is not over—  
Altho' the sad earth will soon cover  
The form of your husband, your lover,  
Oh hearken—Beloved—Beloved!

Think of me—not as you leave me ;  
I know there is silence unbroken,—  
That never a word may be spoken,—  
Yet, many a mystical token  
Shall wing its still way unto thee.

Think of me—not as you leave me ;  
From travail and night I awaken ;  
O, feel that thou art not forsaken !  
'Tis not far away we are taken  
And near am I yet unto thee.

Think of me—not as you leave me ;  
O hearken !—mine too is the sorrow—  
And, with thee, my hope is to borrow  
The balm of some healing to-morrow  
And whisper its secret to thee.

Beloved—Beloved—Beloved—  
O hearken !—for all is not over—  
For *never* the sad earth shall cover  
The *soul* of your husband, your lover,  
O hearken—Beloved—Beloved !

## The Spring-Children.

To \_\_\_\_\_

To you the Muse a tiny gift doth bring—  
A row of word-beads glittering on a string,  
She found them lately in the April dawn  
Among the happy faces of the spring.

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The same strange labor of the ancient dust  
Begins anew,  
And dainty child-like forms, Earth's sheltering crust  
Are creeping thro' ;  
New voices far and near the day are filling,  
While Promise to young ears is lightly trilling—  
Her fairy anthems never rang more thrilling—  
More falsely true.

And not one whisper borne on all the air  
Of heaven's blue  
To hint of aught but love and sunshine there—  
And heaven's dew ;  
Yet, down below the far horizon hiding,  
Are Age and Winter stealthily abiding—  
Each, to the other, vengeful plans confiding—  
In wrath and rue.

But who would be so cruel as to speak  
    (Not I—nor you)  
Of death who, soon or late, us all shall seek—  
    (And find us too ;)  
Nay, leave the April morn unclouded shining,  
The April hearts in joy and trust reclining ;—  
For is not *All* beyond our sad divining—  
    Our mortal view?

Then let us drink with them the sparkling cup  
    Of Nature's brew ;  
Forget, that to this glory rising up,  
    We say—"adieu ;"  
Forget—and join the universal chorus,  
Content that Beauty sometimes kneels before us—  
Content that for to-day is bending o'er us  
    Fair Heaven's blue.

---

To you the Muse her gypsy gift hath brought—  
The row of word-beads on a thread of thought,  
She found them lately in the April dawn—  
And kept them—tho' they were not what she sought.

### To the Human Body.

Thou temple of a thousand mysteries,  
Weird—intricate—and subtle of design !—  
Fashioned and furnished by a hand benign ;  
The gift of kindly earth and friendly skies  
To house the wandering soul ; a paradise,  
When all is well, of harmony divine ;  
When ill, a hell whose prison-walls confine  
Till Death beholds and ends the sacrifice.

When we must leave thee may the same kind grace  
Again attend and lend as true a hand ;  
Mysterious home !—where, for a little space,  
We enter—pause—and strive to understand—  
Gazing with dimming eyes in hope to trace  
Aright the pathway of this shadow-land.

## Conception.

Out from the narrow rooms of Memory,  
We vainly gaze upon the little arc  
Of time that glimmers faintly in the dark  
And awful circle of Eternity.

From narrow rooms of Personality,  
We vainly gaze at things that are, to-day,—  
While, passing ever on the unknown way,  
Go all the pageants of Infinity.

The windows of the House of Life—how few!—  
And these so stained with ancient mold and rust—  
Curtained with error prejudice and dust,—  
What wonder, then, Light comes but faintly thro'!

**War-Voices.**

Hear the moaning in the distance  
Of the centuries long fled ;  
Wraiths of nations Spain has tortured—  
Wraiths of martyrs that have bled ;  
Hear the mournful echoes falling,  
Hear the silent voices calling,  
Hearken to the accusations  
    Of the Dead.

Voices from a sunny south-land  
Near the broad Pacific's blue,  
Speaking in forgotten accents  
Of the wrongs of old Peru,  
Of an Aztec nation strangled—  
King and people murdered, mangled ;  
Hear the tale of Montezuma—  
    All too true.

See the faces mute with anguish  
In the secret torture-cell ;  
Fire and thumbscrew, rack and gibbet  
Sought the soul of Truth to quell ;  
See her, with her subjects bleeding,—  
Crafty, cold, their cries unheeding—  
Mother of the Inquisition—  
Queen of Hell.

Hear those patient gentler voices  
Sadly, softly, fall and rise ;  
Moorish faces—noble foreheads—  
Faces lit with lustrous eyes ;  
From their fanes and alters driven—  
Ties of home and country riven  
By Spain's lightly-broken promise—  
By her lies.

In the tangle of the seaweed  
Faces come and go again ;  
Ah ! the horror of the struggle  
Deep beneath the ocean-plane,  
When that mighty heart was broken  
Ere the war-cry could be spoken ;  
Heed our brother-voices calling  
From the Maine !

They are crying—they are calling—  
Voices of the long-ago,  
Voices yesterday beside us—  
Speaking to us of their woe ;  
Shall we hear them vainly pleading  
For fair Cuba, faint and bleeding?  
We—the boasted sons of freedom?  
Yes—or no?

### The Old Volunteer.

War? Yes it's sad—it's mighty sad,  
And I am one that ought to know ;  
But fightin' Europe's not so bad  
As when our brothers were the foe ;  
So let it come—whate'er betide  
The blue and gray fight side by side.

Fight? Well you bet we had to fight  
To beat the boys that wore the gray !  
We just went in with all our might  
And what was left of us would say :  
“By Gosh! Wouldn't somethin' have to hide  
If the blue and gray fought side by side!”

Go? Yes, I'd kind o' like to go ;  
'Twould be a sight worth bein' seen—  
The blue and gray both in one row  
And drinkin' out o' the same canteen ;  
No, the whole big world won't be too wide  
For Spain, when the boys fight side by side.

Old? Yes, I'm gettin' sort of old—  
My bones ain't what they used to be,  
And I can't stand the heat and cold  
I could back there in Sixty-three ;  
But it kind o' warms me up inside  
To think of them—fightin' side by side.

## An Idyl of the Hills.

Calm silent friends! Again their crests I see,  
Crowned with a diadem of sunset-gold,  
Encircling the green valley. As of old  
Their silence speaks—seeming to welcome me ;  
Uplifted in the blue, they seem to be  
In meditation o'er what they behold,  
Solemn—from secrets never to be told,  
Solemn—from watching thro' eternity.

Calm silent friends! Teach me to wait, to bear  
Unmurmuringly with this little life ;  
Fill me with strength that conquereth despair  
When days are gray—with doubt and discord rife ;  
Teach me in trust to meet what Heaven wills,  
Dark silent friends!—ye beautiful old hills!

## I.

Slowly we climbed the slope and gained at last  
The crest of a high hill. Below us lay,  
Sharply defined, the valley like a map—  
The fields of grain and fertile meadow-land,  
Where the tall grass, in the green waves like the sea,  
Bowed to the greeting of the hurrying breeze.  
Adown the distance, shimmering here and there  
Its silver thread, wandered a vagrant brook,  
Now shooting down a steep and rocky slope,  
Now grumbling o'er a tiny precipice,  
Now resting mirror-like in shady pools,  
Calm, cool and tranquil; like this fitful life—  
Half peace—half turmoil—strayed the rivulet,  
Until, afar, it too did seem no more—  
Lost 'mid the shadows of the sky and hills.

Upon the grassy slopes, the cattle fed,  
And o'er the fields the children's voices rang  
Inspired with all the joyousness of June.  
The barefoot urchin, freed from irksome school,  
Ran unrestrained ; no more the musty book,  
The watchful eye, the frowning discipline ;  
Instead, Dame Nature's vast indulgent smile,  
Her fields, her streams, her woodland shade and  
                    song,  
With all the varied treasures, manifold,  
Dear to the heart of man, before he learns  
To grope in grimy ways for gold and fame.

Down in the vale the village nestled close ;  
The hills above—grim-visaged sentinels—  
On every side protecting from the throng  
The little hamlet resting at their feet ;  
Where, free from hurry and the brazen blare  
Of crowded streets, the quiet people solved  
Their village problems, careless of the strife  
Raging about them in an eager world.

Here Paul and I had met. Old friends were we ;  
He, like myself, had sought this far-off vale,  
Filled with a longing for the boyhood home.  
Time was when we were of that noisy brood  
In boisterous play below ; here had we wrought  
In childish toil, here frisked in childish glee ;  
Drifting apart as time and change dispersed  
Our youthful band.

Little remained as of yore ;  
Tho' change creeps slowly thro' these village homes,  
A score of years had served to strangely blur  
That magic picture of the boyish brain.  
Here sought we each the other, and to ease  
A sense of desolation, moved as one,—  
Amid the old scenes—all so sadly new,  
Amid the new scenes—all so sadly old.

Gaining the crest we paused : “Here let us rest,”  
Said Paul, “here is a shady sylvan seat  
Upon this prostrate giant of the wood  
That in his prime hath met the doom of death,—  
Uprooted in some violence of the storm.  
Behold how heedless Nature is of all!—  
Yet, heedful too, for closely following Death,  
She strives to mend the ruin that he works—  
Building again—a new form from the old ;  
She does her best—what mortal would do more?  
’Tis not for us to say she is not wise.

“How clean and pure is all her handiwork!—  
’Tis my delight—this beauty of the earth ;  
It shames the city flushed with foetid breath,  
Where Splendor walks with Want, hand clasped in  
hand,  
And Pleasure weds herself to Wretchedness.  
Let us forget what *is*—and ramble back  
To days when we were wholly of the hills.”

So sat we talking—of the years gone by,  
Old friends, old hopes, old troubles, joys and dreams ;  
Thus chanced I to recall a certain lass—  
A sweetheart once of Paul's in earlier days :  
“Aye Paul,” quoth I, “and what of Lelia now?”—  
And wondered, for a look as if of pain  
Passed o'er his face, as silently he seemed  
Asking himself: “Aye, what of Lelia now?”  
Then moved beyond his wont by that old scene  
So dear to both, and all the memories  
Awakened by our talk, he told me how  
He drifted to the city and forgot  
In busy life his early home and friends.  
His words were few and quietly were spoken,  
But much I gathered from his half-sad smile  
And a pause or two made as he told the tale.

Next day we parted—he to his daily tasks  
And I to mine ; but that which he had told  
Linked to itself what had remained untold ;  
For, rising in my memory, came the past—  
In still procession moved the phantom days  
Wreathed in the garlands woven long ago—  
Woven in fadeless green of hill and dale ;  
These told me truly all that he had felt—  
Whispering the tiny story o'er anew—  
And as they whispered it—here is it given.

---

Voices—silent voices have the fields ;  
And they murmur of the glory of the sun,  
And of Mother Nature's loving hand that shields  
Her humblest one.

Voices—silent voices have the years ;  
Oft they whisper lest we happen to forget,  
And their voices always bring us smiles and tears  
    With vain regret.

Voices—silent voices have the skies ;  
They are calling from the stars thro' every land—  
Voices that no mortal ear, however wise,  
    Can understand.

Voices—silent voices have the dead ;  
Do we hear them sometimes?—aye, it may be so ;  
When these harsher voices of the earth are fled—  
    Then we shall know.

## II.

In this fair valley, many years ago,  
In happy comradeship two children dwelt ;  
Inseparable, they, in childish task and play ;  
Beside the brook they fished and sailed their boats,  
Or waded barefoot in the cooling stream ;  
Upon the slopes they toiled in friendly strife,  
Heaping their baskets high with crimson loads  
Of wild strawberries hidden in the grass ;  
Among the orchard trees, when autumn came,  
They helped to ease the over-burdened boughs  
From loads of fruit ; and when the Frost-king's breath  
Turned all the summer's green to brown and grey,  
They vied with squirrels, scattering the fallen leaves  
In searching for the treasures of the wood.

Each winter, at the prosy village school,  
They plodded thro' the round of daily tasks  
In slow pursuit of knowledge. Thus they learned  
To read, to write, to spell, also somewhat  
About the vastness of the earth, and these  
Innumerable forms of life that come and go ;  
Strange tales they read—of distant folk and lands  
Enshrined in mystery across the seas,  
Till Paul would sigh with longing for the day  
When he might leave the quiet country dell  
For life and action of a larger world.  
At this would Lelia frown and shake her head :  
What better place than home o'er all the earth?—  
What weary toil to roam from place to place !—  
The cities?—they were din and dust and heat,—  
She wished for nothing better than the hills.

As time passed on, the childish comradeship,  
Shaped by the deft strong touch of Nature's hand,  
Grew with the years to something more and more ;  
Till Paul, grown tall, was filled with youthful zeal  
To win a name of which she should be proud.  
More narrow seemed the valley day by day,  
More stupid seemed the homely farming life,  
As Fancy whispered her enchanting tales  
And ever brighter gilded all the world.

One Sabbath morning, as was oft their wont,  
They walked together to the village church  
To hear the parson preach his fiery creed.  
Paul heeded not the sermon with its blasts  
Of dire denunciation, for he heard  
As one who slumbers hears the storm at night ;  
His mind was wandering far across the hills  
To where arose the city's din and smoke ;  
Yes, he would go—no more would he delay  
To speak to Lelia—tell her all his dreams.

The service over, side by side they strayed  
Across the fields. O'er hill and valley reigned  
The Sabbath calm. Above, the vagrant clouds  
Lazily drifting, flecked the earth with shade.  
The birds were scolding o'er their crowded nests,  
Urging their broods to try the untaught wing.  
Upon the grassy bank beside the brook  
They paused ; while Paul in silent listless mood,  
Pondering the words to tell of his resolve,  
Plucked off the daisies near and flung them down  
Upon the stream that lightly sped away.

"Would I," said he, "might stray as does the brook ;  
Leaving the hills to wander ever on  
Thro' strange new scenes—'twould be a pleasant fate."  
And Lelia, musing, answered half aloud :  
"It goes to seek the sea ; there, in the storm,  
Its tiny wave lost in the mighty flood,  
It tosses, till the sun, in pity, draws  
It from the trackless deep and bears it back ;—  
Much happier seems it here among the hills."

Paul hearkened with a smile to her reply.  
A child no more—the woman's words and way ;  
The butterfly had burst the chrysalis ;  
The woman had usurped the childish throne  
And Beauty one more victory had won,  
Speaking her triumph in the glowing cheek,  
The downcast eye, the faultless face and form ;  
These moved Paul's youthful heart as ne'er before,  
So, once again was that old story told—  
That prelude to the cradle and the grave.

“I build a castle, Lelia, high and fair—  
A shining castle—founded on my dreams ;  
Soon shall I leave the hills and strive to win  
Those prizes men hold dear—position—wealth.  
I shall succeed—building my castle high ;  
And more than this, aye, more than all beside,  
I see you, Lelia, as the mistress there.”  
But Lelia answered not, her downward gaze  
Was on a fallen flower at her feet.

---

Fallen—broken—and dead ;  
Crushed by a careless tread,  
A beauty of yesterday—  
A delicate tinted flower  
Lately so regally gay ;  
Queen of a tiny bower,  
Kissed by the sunset-ray ;  
Ah, what may come with to-morrow !  
Ah, what may fade with to-day !  
What measures of joy and of sorrow  
May ring in the weird melody !  
We weave our dreams of the future—  
Weaving with gossamer thread,  
Unmindful that the to-morrow  
May find us broken and dead.

## III.

A dozen years from out eternity  
Had come and vanished in the eternal stream.  
Innumerable lives had found the paths of earth,  
Innumerable lives had left the mortal throng.  
To each had come some little loss and gain.  
The Old had passed to make way for the New—  
Poor sovereign of a moment—soon to fade  
Into the Old and pass away in turn.  
Oh, Change!—eternal mistress of all things—  
Attended by thy handmaids—Birth and Death;  
A trio bringing mortals bitter-sweet—  
A trio bringing mortals thorns and flowers.

These years had moved Paul far from quiet scenes—  
Far from the hill-girt valley of his youth.  
His parents dead, the old home in strange hands,  
Away Paul went—brave in his youthful dreams.  
He walked the street, one of the multitude,  
And found the iron sternness that doth teach  
How small a part one puny mortal plays,  
Ev'n tho' he climb the topmost crags of life.

The fleeting visions of his early days—  
The fairy castle fashioned all of dreams,  
Shaken and torn by harsh experience,  
Long since had vanished in forgotten dust.  
He learned to be content in narrow bounds  
That hedge about the ordinary life ;  
A city-clerk—he faced the dull routine  
With frugal habits and courageous toil.

Oft had he longed for home, to see old friends,  
But this his slender means would not afford.  
Once every week, thro' two long home-sick years,  
Lelia had written all that happened there—  
Bringing him courage with her cheerful words ;  
Then, letters came and went at intervals  
That lengthened as the seasons went their way—  
Then altogether ceased ; so slowly died  
The tie, that neither saw nor could have told  
Just when and how it first began to fade ;  
And afterward, Paul heard she too was gone—  
Leaving her home—so it was said—to teach  
In some far city-school, he knew not where.

Thus, far and ever farther from the hills  
Paul drifted, till he seldom thought of them ;  
And when he did, they bore the purple haze  
That time and distance weave about all things ;  
And Lelia was forgotten with the rest,—  
For absence works with time and will erase  
The hour of pleasure with the hour of pain ;  
Yet, sometimes when he left the noisy street  
On holidays, and sought the fields and wood,  
There he found voices rising up to speak,  
Tho' faintly, of the days that were no more.

New friends, new ties, new interests, Paul found ;  
And then he married—one who was fair and good ;  
They were well mated, and they lived in peace—  
Blessings that marriage does not always bring.  
Paul's steady habits and his honest ways  
Won them a home—a cottage near the town ;  
They had surrounded it with trees and flowers  
And lived content with what Fate had bequeathed.

So the fair castle, bright with youthful dreams,  
Had fallen ; and instead, there stood a home—  
A tiny home. In place of fame and wealth  
Paul found content and toil clasped hand in hand.  
Instead of Lelia, Destiny had chosen  
Another as the mistress of his life.  
Such are the lessons taught by time and change,  
So are the dreams of mortals put aside,  
So do the best-laid plans of mortals fail ;  
We do not know the lot the future holds,  
We do not know the present—or the past,  
We do not know each other—or ourselves—  
And thus—we blindly build our little lives.

---

Adown the silence of the glade,  
Or borne on some refrain,  
Or with the perfume of a rose—  
The first-love comes again.

Comes sad and sweet, a memory  
Across the troubled years,  
To banish from a weary mind  
The present hopes and fears.

Once more there comes the morn of life,  
The first immortal kiss,  
Again ring out old melodies  
Of spirit-thrilling bliss.

Adown the silence of the glade,  
Or borne on some refrain,  
Or with the perfume of a rose—  
The first-love comes again.

## IV.

“A fortnight hence and time is all my own,  
A leave of absence for a month is given—  
And then for freedom and my native hills!  
How sweet to see again the home of old—  
To walk the fields fresh with the new-mown hay!  
Tho’ much be changed and many faces gone—  
Lost in the toils of life or claimed by death—  
Yet will the hills—the same old hills—look down  
And send me greeting as in days of yore ;  
The rivulet murmur welcome, as when first  
I found it winding onward to the sea.

“Where do we find the ever-steadfast friends?—  
In mortal minds?—that look with searching eye  
To find the hidden fault and lay it bare ;  
That, with discerning ear, proclaim the note  
Of discord—when no melody of earth  
Can sound aright the true and perfect strain ;  
In mortal love?—unstable as the smile  
Of summer on a fitful April day ;  
In mortal forms?—that pass like any dream,  
Fading to shapeless clay from which they came ;  
In these?—or in the sky, the fields, the hills—  
That stand unmoved thro’ all our littleness ;  
Which are the steadfast friends—the friends that guide  
To higher things?”

One pleasant summer morn,  
Mounted upon his wheel, Paul left the city.  
Each mile between the new home and the old  
Was fraught with subtle beauty, known to those  
Who are true-lovers of the earth in June.  
Paul felt the thrill that animates the bird,  
When, from the cage escaped, she seeks her nest—  
Gliding o’er hill and dale, her happy note  
Ringing with rapture ; for the close-shut cell  
Gives freedom a new brightness, all unknown  
Before the heart has felt a prison’s thrall.

Three days he journeyed. On the third, as came  
The evening with its shadows, draping earth  
In mourning for the dying summer day,  
There, like a gem lost in the valley's green,  
Again Paul saw the hamlet of his youth.  
Dismounting from the wheel, he cast himself  
Down on the sacred ground ; the vale of old !—  
How gently there had fallen the hand of Change ;  
How heavily that hand on mortals weighed  
Which to the earth had borne but a caress.

The twilight deepened, and he seemed again  
The happy careless boy of other days ;  
The years, the knowledge of maturity,  
Were blotted out as things that had not been.  
He felt the sunshine of a vanished June,  
He felt his heart thrill with forgotten joys,  
He saw the faces known to earth no more,  
He heard the voices that were ever hushed ;  
The Present fled away ; the faded Past  
Returned and for the moment reigned supreme.

As thus he lay—lost in those other days—  
Upon his shoulder lightly fell a hand,  
Upon his ear there lightly fell the words :  
“You?—Paul?” He started from his reverie,  
For there beside him stood a mortal form ;  
And looking down upon him with the stars,  
Once more there came the light of Lelia’s eyes.

---

Beneath the stars—the happy stars—  
That glitter in the happy skies,  
A long-lost voice to wake again  
The dreams that sleep in Paradise.

Beneath the stars—the happy stars—  
A long-lost voice and long-lost eyes  
To light the half-forgotten paths  
That lead the way to Paradise.

## V.

A week they loitered as in days of yore  
Upon the hillsides and beside the stream,  
Arousing drowsy echoes of the past,  
Finding anew the treasures that had lain  
Long buried in the dust of other days—  
Treasures of that strange world forever lost.  
They talked of newer worlds which each had found,  
Of all this shifting scenery of life,  
Of Fate that placed their lives so far apart,—  
And then they paused one evening near the graves—  
For on the morrow Paul was to return  
Unto the city, and he wished to bid  
A long farewell to those two sacred mounds  
Where lay, beneath, his parents' sleeping forms.

“Yes, Lelia, I to-morrow go my way ;  
These scenes fill me with sadness that will dwell  
With me till I, too, sleep the eternal sleep,  
Or till we meet in more congenial spheres.  
There is a living sorrow—always near—  
That floods my very soul as Memory speaks  
The many cruel changes wrought by Time.

Better it is to go, and let Time bind  
The wounds—searing them with forgetfulness—  
Than to remain to hear and see each hour  
The things that show to me what I have lost.”  
Along the beaten pathway they returned  
In silence to the village, while sad thoughts—  
Swift thoughts—that leap the passes of the brain,  
Asking no aid of mortal tongue and ear,  
Like music saddened, whispered that to each  
Which clumsy words would never have expressed.

Again Paul spoke: “This puny earthly life  
Is as one tiny drop in boundless seas ;  
Our puny minds are as dull little lights  
Lost in the brightness of a sunlit noon ;  
Our fragile bodies are but crumbling clay ;  
Yet, there is Love—divine eternal Love ;  
And thro’ this tumult wrought by time and change,  
A higher Power—all unseen by man—  
May be unfolding what is for the best ;  
And now—farewell—farewell—till happier days.”

---

Lightly on the breath of evening  
    drifts a melody divine,  
Passing on into the silent night alone ;  
And the chorus—rising—falling—  
    in the distance echoes : “Thine,  
When the shadows of this lonely life are gone.”

Then a whisper to the darkness :  
    “Mine forever—wholly mine?  
Will Love somewhere, sometime, somehow,  
    claim his own?”—  
And again the fairy chorus—  
    sadly, softly—echoes : “Thine,  
When the shadows of this lonely life are gone.”

## VI.

With early dawn Paul traced the backward course,  
Regardless of the beauty of the June.  
He sought to leave behind, his painful thoughts,—  
To soothe his spirit with the motion lent  
By winged wheels. So, on and on, all day  
The miles sped out beneath the burnished steel;  
A restless night, passed at a woodman's cot,  
And still another day by field and town,  
Paul steadily kept on his homeward flight.  
At last, afar, he saw the city's smoke;  
Then, slackening the fierce immoderate pace,  
He looked about and cooled his heated brow.

Above his head, the distant skies aflame,  
The glory of the sunset slowly died ;  
The pillared clouds, piled in fantastic forms,  
Glimmered with blending hues of rose and gold ;  
While in the east, the rising moon, full-faced,  
Sent forth her silver ray, again to join  
The light of her resplendent brother-orb ;  
Down in the distance, glinting thro' the veil  
Of twilight softly gathering over earth,  
Like fireflies, shone the myriad city-lights ;  
Within a near-by grove, a whip-poor-will  
Among the leaves sent forth her evening call.  
It was a scene of splendor, calm, and peace,  
To lift the soul above all petty things—  
Above the trifling sorrows of the world  
To boundaries of fairer realms beyond.

Paul paused, baring his head in reverence—  
His mind at rest—for that high harmony  
Restored to quiet his disordered breast.  
He watched in altering mood the colors fade,  
The gloaming deepen into blessed night ;  
Then, carefully along the darkened way,  
Resumed the journey forward to his home.

---

The fairest words but vaguely can outline—  
The noblest art but dimly can portray  
The wreaths of beauty, mystic hands entwine  
About the portals of the passing day.

For the canvas is of never-ceasing space  
O'er which the fairy—Light—hath softly trod  
His way to snow-white clouds, thereon to trace  
The visions of the perfect artist—God.

## VII.

Paul stood in silence near his open door ;  
The moon passed in and out among the clouds,  
Playing in sheen and shadow o'er the lawn,  
Half-hiding, half-revealing, here and there,  
The thousand trifles that make home most dear ;  
About the windows hung the draperies  
In folds that only woman can arrange ;  
The flowers, nodding 'neath their loads of dew,  
Proclaimed the gentle mistress who had helped  
To win for them their beauty by her care—  
Upon the night air floated their perfume  
In greeting to the mortal whom she loved ;  
The breeze that whispered in the evergreens  
Seemed lightly o'er and o'er to breathe her name ;  
The birds that filled the day with song and cheer  
Chirped to her from their nests a last goodnight ;  
While, thro' the hallway, in a room beyond,  
Paul saw the queen of this enchanting realm  
Rocking to peaceful slumber, to and fro,  
Their healthy child, clasped close in mother-love—  
The pride and jewel of their blended lives.

“God ever bless my wife, my child, my home!  
That refuge from a selfish troubled world.  
Ah! he who loses them doth lose his all,  
And he who never finds them hath not lived.  
How light the fleeting fancies of the past—  
How faint and feeble ring all other notes  
Compared unto that Heaven-descended song  
That Love sings in a quiet happy home;”  
So saying, Paul inside the cottage stepped,  
At peace with all the sorrows of the past—  
At peace with what the future might contain.

She started at the sounding of his tread—  
But seeing in the hallway the dear form,  
She laid the sleeping child upon its couch  
And ran to meet him with extended arms :  
“O, Paul ! I am so glad that you are come ;  
You do not know how lonely I have been ;  
I never knew how dear you were to me  
Until I felt that you were far away !  
How fared you on your journey 'mid the hills?—  
Did the old scenes, wherein you passed your youth,  
Awaken joy?—or did they sorrow bring?—  
Or, mingled joy with sorrow—bitter-sweet?  
How grave you look—you need your home and rest.

“Cast from your mind all troubled memories—  
Forget them—they must vanish in the past.  
Come, let me take away the dusty wheel ;  
There’s water cold and hot—now for a bath,  
And then a luncheon (fit for none but kings)  
Of golden butter, rolls just newly baked,  
With berries ripe and red, fresh from the fields—  
The berries that I often hear you say  
Remind you of the days when you were young.”  
Paul turned with smiling face and kissed his wife,—  
Such artists as these women ever are—  
So easily they read our every mood—  
So skillfully they touch the proper chords.

---

From out the night—into the night—  
That still night—which may hold more day,  
That darkness—which may hold more light  
Than greets us on Earth's twilight way ;  
Thus goes the human crowd along—  
From out the night—into the night ;  
Each singing his imperfect song—  
A song of error—and of right.  
A moment here beneath the shade—  
Then gone with Time's eternal flight—  
Gone—everything that is, shall fade—  
From out the night—into the night ;  
Thus goes the human crowd along  
In search forever for the light ;  
Each singing his imperfect song—  
From out the night—into the night.

## Autumn Song.

*Let us depart, O Muse; why should we fear?  
Let us depart, the earth grows brown and sere;  
No more the song—no more the radiant Summer—  
For all are hushed to silence chill and drear;  
All bow in sleep as rises the newcomer—  
Old Winter—first and last of all the year—  
Behold him near.*

*Let us depart; why should we later stay?  
Let us depart, the days grow sad and gray;  
Our rose hath bloomed and fallen now, forever,  
And love hath lingered near and flown away;  
All music now hath died, all dreams are over;—  
Away, afar—what matter where we stray?—  
On what the way?*

*Let us depart; with this last song we go  
Down toward the shadow of that vale below,—  
Where, far across the silence, still are dreaming  
Forgotten Dreamers—vanished long ago;  
Where, thro' the darkness, faintly comes the gleaming  
Of strange new lights that ever brighter glow—  
Afar from woe.*

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